

Byzantine Culture in Translation

Byzantina Australiensia

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Byzantine Culture in Translation

Edited by

Amelia Brown and Bronwen Neil



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Preface

The chapters of this volume examine the practices and theories of translation inside the Byzantine empire and beyond its horizons to the east, north and west. It builds on the presentations at the 18th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, convened by the editors of this volume at the University of Queensland on 28–30 November 2014. Additional chapters were commissioned to complete the volume and make it a coherent whole. All chapters have been anonymously peer reviewed.

Acknowledgements

The eleven plates in Chapter 10 are used with permission of the authors. Maria Mavroudi's chapter, the keynote address of our conference, is presented in the form in which it was given. An expanded version may be found in *Speculum* 90.1, 2015, 28–59 © Medieval Academy of America.

We are grateful for the generous support of the University of Queensland's School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, which hosted the 18th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies on 28–30 November 2014. Thanks to all our anonymous peer reviewers, whose time and expertise have improved the volume immeasurably, and to the executive committee of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies. The longevity of this series, *Byzantina Australiensia*, is a testament to their commitment to Byzantine studies in Australia over many decades. Thanks to Caillan Davenport, who undertook some of the initial editorial duties with us. Thanks also to our proof reader Sandra Sewell, to Dinah Joesoef for page layout and to Leonela Fundic for the index. Finally, to the team at Brill, headed by Loes Schouten and Tessa Schild, we offer our most sincere thanks. The editors hope that this volume will mark the beginning of a new and successful collaboration on the series.

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Abbreviations

BHG	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i> , F. Halkin (ed.) (1957) 3 vols (Brussels)
ByzA	Byzantina Australiensia
ByzZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CQ n.s.	<i>Classical Quarterly new series</i>
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae (Bonn)
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae (Bonn)
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i> (Washington, DC)
GCS	Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller (Berlin)
GCS NF	Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller Neue Folge (Berlin)
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA)
LP	<i>Le Liber Pontificalis, texte, introduction</i> , L. Duchesne and C. Vogel (eds) (1955–1957) 2nd edn, 3 vols (Paris)
LSJ	<i>A Greek–English Lexicon</i> , H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones and R. McKenzie (eds) (1925) 9th edn (Oxford)
MGH AA	Monumenta Germaniae Historica Auctores Antiquissimi (Berlin)
PG	Patrologia Graeca, J.-P. Migne (ed.) (1857–1866) 161 vols (Paris)
PL	Patrologia Latina, J.-P. Migne (ed.) (1844–1864) 221 vols (Paris)
PLRE	<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , vol. 1: A.D. 260–395; vol. 2: A.D. 395–527, vol. 3: A.D. 527–641, A. H. M. Jones et al. (eds) (Cambridge, 1971–1992)
PMBZ	<i>Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit, Erste Abteilung (641–867)</i> R.-J. Lilie et al. (eds) (1998–2002) 7 vols (Berlin)
RSBN	<i>Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici</i>
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool)

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Introduction

Amelia Brown

Byzantium was a culture of constant translation. Within the empire, individuals from the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople down to the people of the imperial capital, other cities and the countryside, engaged in translating the texts, structures and concepts of their Roman imperial past into a meaningful context for their present. In every era of Byzantine culture there was also contemporary translation: among various registers of written and spoken Greek, and in practices between the capital and the periphery, the cities and the countryside, the Church and the State. But Byzantium was also a culture of translation passing beyond boundaries of language, space and time. From its very beginnings there was almost constant translation between Latin and Greek, especially in the areas of law and the Church. In the East and West there were translations in and out of Syriac, Arabic, Greek, Latin and Coptic (among other languages), and translation of the Classical past to the complex present, especially after the conquests of Islam. To the north, agents of Byzantium from Ulphilas to Sts Cyril and Methodios created the scripts and translated the texts which brought literacy and Christianity to the Goths, Slavs, Rus and other northern groups. The northern polities of the Balkans (for example seventeenth-century Wallachia) and beyond translated Byzantine religion and culture with divergent reference to their own religious or Classical tradition than in the East or West. The reception and adaptation of Byzantine culture continued well beyond 1453, with new translations of its languages, practices and concepts made first by its Ottoman, European and Mediterranean heirs, and then even as far afield as the Americas and Australia.

The chapters of this volume examine the practices and theories of translation inside the Byzantine empire and beyond its horizons to the west, north and east. This volume builds on the presentations at the 18th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, held at University of Queensland on 28–30 November 2014. Additional chapters were commissioned to complete the volume and make it a coherent whole. Each chapter engages with specific translated texts or practices, and draws conclusions about the theories of translation employed, and the historical ramifications of these acts of translation at the time, and for our contemporary understanding of Byzantine culture and its legacy in the modern world. The themes and conclusions of each chapter are summarized below.

In Chapter One, Roger Scott traces the translation of the first Christian emperor Constantine through Byzantine chronicles from Malalas in the 6th

century to Zonaras in the 12th, with reference to the divergent accounts of Constantine's baptism. With particular focus on the chronographers George the Monk and Kedrenos, Scott illuminates the complex process whereby eastern, Greek and more historically accurate accounts of Constantine's baptism at Nicomedia were gradually replaced in Byzantine chronicles by the translation of western, originally Latin and mostly mythical stories of his baptism by Pope Sylvester in Rome. He concludes that this happened in stages not only through the research and compilation methods of Byzantine chronographers, but especially because of the drive to give Constantine an orthodox rather than Arian and early rather than late baptism. These concerns importantly trumped not only proximity to Constantinople, eastern Christianity and Greek language sources, but even historical reality.

Michael Edward Stewart considers how attitudes to imperial court eunuchs as military leaders changed in parallel in both Greek and Latin texts from the 4th to the 7th centuries, and the key role played by Justinian's eunuch general Narses and his portrayal by Procopius as well as western authors. From the unified hostility of Claudian and Ammianus as eastern Greeks writing in Latin, he sees a split in the 5th century between scorn for eunuch assassins in the West and growing respect for their military activities in the East. The military success of Solomon and especially Narses in North Africa and then Italy, and their sixth-century Greek portrayal by Procopius in particular, seems to have then laid the groundwork for how the seventh-century campaigns and ambitions of Eleutherius and Olympius were received in Italy, and remembered in Latin texts. There is a link to the later 6th and early 7th centuries, where antagonism towards Justin II in West and East caused a further escalation in praise of Justinian's eunuch generals. Thus by the middle of the 7th century, military eunuchs in Italy were portrayed in Latin texts as sharing an element of *romanitas* with the Byzantine East, whence they came, and even as potential rivals, under papal auspices, for the Roman imperium retained by Byzantine emperors.

Ann Moffatt's chapter compares tales of magical travel to and from Constantinople told in hagiographical contexts in three ninth-century sources (one Latin, two Greek). In his Latin account of the bishops of Ravenna, Agnellus tells the tale of Abbot John's return to Ravenna overnight in a magic ship, for which reason Damian, his saintly archbishop (692–708), required that he do penance. West and East both accepted a canon of the Quinisext Council in Trullo on the penalty for having recourse to magic. However, from the evidence of their Greek Lives, it appears that Joseph the Hymnographer (810–886), when held prisoner on Crete, escaped and made a very quick return to Constantinople through the intervention of St Nicholas of Myra, while on the other hand Leo, the bishop of Catania, personally defeated and bound the wicked local magician Heliodorus. The latter had twice travelled under guard

to Constantinople and then escaped back to Catania to avoid capital punishment. Precedents for extraordinarily rapid travel are noted in ancient Jewish and Pythagorean traditions, e.g. in Ezekiel and in the Life of Apollonius of Tyana, with elements which also occur in the ninth-century hagiographical contexts. Moffatt concludes that the Christianization of tales of magical travel must have taken place as much in the realms of popular culture as in the written texts we now happen to possess.

Yvette Hunt draws out the background to Romanos II's gift in 948 of an illustrated Greek manuscript of Dioscorides' *de materia medica* to 'Abd al-Rahman III, the Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus. Her chapter gives greater depth to the traffic in medical manuscripts outlined by Maria Mavroudi in Chapter Seven, and the complex contestation of Classical learning and political status which underlay it. Diplomatic exchange of gifts was used to show status, and express ownership, underlined by Romanos II's warning that this manuscript required a reader of Greek and medical scholar to interpret it. The context of this gift includes the Abbasid translation of Greek texts into Arabic, including Dioscorides, which had already made their way to Umayyad Spain, and Persian (hence Arab) claims to primacy in science, once destroyed by Alexander the Great and now rightly reclaimed from the Byzantine emperors who supposedly had hoards of Greek books under lock and key. Hunt then lays out the Byzantine side of this contest around the Classical heritage as it played out under iconoclasm and such figures as John the Grammarian, Leo the Mathematician and the patriarch and bibliophile Photios. All were involved with the eastern Abbasid court, and with Byzantine debates around Classical learning which Constantine VII and Romanos II tried in many ways to resolve. Like Mavroudi in Chapter Seven, Hunt emphasizes the two-way exchange of texts and ideas, noting that the monk sent to Cordoba with the Dioscorides text knew Arabic, and that 'Abd al-Rahman III had earlier been received in Constantinople using the Throne of Solomon. Thus, Romanos' gift of this particular Greek copy of *de materia medica* was part of reclaiming but also translating the Roman and Greek heritage of Byzantium at the eastern and western courts of Arab Muslim rulers, asserting the primacy of Byzantine culture between them and before them.

John Burke contributes a close reading of a funerary epigram on the emperor Nikephoros II Phokas, and argues that it is a response to texts of many genres produced before and after Nikephoros' murder in 969. The epigram is attributed to a certain metropolitan John of Melitene, and Burke argues that this attribution is not incompatible with what we know of him: that he was learned and wrote in the early 11th century. He also clearly separates out the different speakers present in the epigram, investigates its mysteries of context and content, and dissociates its Scythians, Russians and *pan ethnos* from any historical

later attack on Constantinople. Rather he carefully sets out how this epigram made a translation of the memory of Nikephoros Phokas, and his murder, into the early 11th century, by drawing on the historical work of Paul the Deacon, the poetry (including an epitaph) of John Geometres, the poetic *de Creta capta* of Theodosius the Deacon and the *Office for St Nikephoros Phokas*. The epigram draws on all of these, and presents a progression of threats and prayers to the dead emperor with rhetorical exaggeration, irony and even parody. Like Scott's chapter, this is a helpful window into the forces that shaped our texts between historical reality, literary conventions and contemporary circumstances.

John Duffy observes with surprise how few early Byzantine religious tales were translated into Latin, then offers explicit and implicit evidence for the theory and practice of translation from Greek into Latin of one notable collection, the *Liber de miraculis* by John of Amalfi. This western monk was resident at the Zoodochos Pege monastery in Constantinople, and translated 42 Greek religious tales into Latin in the 11th century, probably from a *paterikon* which drew on Moschus' *Spiritual Meadow* and other sources. Beyond his claim to using the *sermo communis* so that his work might be read widely, John's translation methods are exposed by a comparison of his Latin version with the Greek of one of the tales, and found to be comfortably in context with the theories of translation of his more prolix contemporary Leo. Writing a Latin introduction to his translation of the *Miracles of Michael of Chonae* from the Amalfiot monastery on Athos, Leo strives for a balance between a 'word for word' and 'sense for sense' translation. He points to this necessity for himself and his predecessors. Seeing this put into practice in John's subtle emendments, occasional errors, frequent latinized Greek terms (or roots) and good Church Latin, illuminates the practice and the theory of eleventh-century translations of Greek religious tales for Latin-reading monastic communities from Constantinople to the Bay of Naples and beyond.

Maria Mavroudi provided the keynote lecture for our conference, and her chapter here highlights the evidence for three aspects of Byzantine translation, and how these might change some long-held ideas (and prejudices) about Byzantine culture. Byzantines translated their ancient Greek texts and models, and hence their own Classical tradition, to suit their own needs, producing copies, new collections and commentaries especially for Christianity and to serve what we might call practical as well as cultural needs, whether for medicine, astronomy, philosophy or poetry. Though modern scholars have presented this as (inferior) imitation, or fossilization of Classical literature, it was an act of continuous translation by individuals for specific purposes. This is the case, she argues, also for the other two aspects of Byzantine translation covered in her chapter: the translation of Greek texts, old and new, into Arabic or Latin, and then the less well known movement in the other direction. She counters

with specific examples the traditional story of the History of Science as passing by translation from Byzantine Greek copies of ancient Greek texts to Arabic and then Latin and the Renaissance. Overlooked or marginalized in this narrative is the influence of translations of contemporary Byzantine astronomical and medical texts in the 7th to 9th centuries, whether into Arabic, Syriac, Slavic or Latin. Thus the Greek to Arabic translations of Abbasid Baghdad led not just to Arabic-Latin translations later by the Crusaders and then in the West, but also pre-Crusader and Comnenian Christian Greek-Arabic translations in Syria and Mesopotamia, or Arabic-Greek translations in Constantinople. There was substantial translation of Greek material straight into Latin, too, especially in the Crusader states in Byzantine territory after 1204. Mavroudi's conclusion is twofold: that productions of contemporary Byzantium also played an important role alongside ancient texts in the translation movement, at least in the areas of astronomy and medicine, whether into Arabic or Latin, and that all the translation activity of the medieval world needs to be understood in context, as intended to fulfil specific purposes in each of the societies which inherited the Classical tradition.

Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides reflects on the reasons behind and results of translation in the other direction, namely Maximus Planudes' Greek translations of Latin philosophy, and especially works by Boethius and Augustine. Through a careful examination of passages from each of these translations, the original works, and ancient Greek philosophical texts, she argues that Planudes was genuinely interested in how the Latin authors had tried to reconcile Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and Porphyry with one another and Christian doctrine. Planudes supported the reunion of the Churches, and thus had political, religious and philosophical reasons for translating both Boethius and Augustine into Greek. Anagnostou-Laoutides gives a close analysis of parallel Latin and Greek passages on human reason, memory, the trinity and creation *ex nihilo*, and in each case shows convincingly how Planudes has chosen Greek vocabulary hearkening back to Aristotle and especially Plotinus to fit the Latin works into a Greek and orthodox philosophical discourse, helping his readers appreciate the common influences upon eastern and western Christian theology.

The next chapter takes this process forward in time, as Michael Champion traces the translation of the works of Dorotheus of Gaza from the 6th to the 16th century and beyond, with special attention to his reception among early modern and especially Jesuit humanists. Dorotheus was a doctor at a monastery near Gaza, and in Greek prose combined the Christian monastic and Greek philosophical traditions along with rhetoric and medicine. He was very popular in his original Greek, as well as in translation: in Arabic by the 9th century, Georgian by the 10th century, and Slavonic and Russian by the 15th century. Champion focuses especially on Dorotheus' influence on western

monasticism and humanistic thinking through his many Latin translations, in both manuscripts and printed copies, and the annotations they bear, primarily those of the Benedictine Hilarion of Verona in the 15th century through to Balthasar Cordier in the 17th century. Through a close study of Dorotheus' *Discourse* 11, 'On Cutting Off the Passions,' Champion shows how subsequent Latin translations tied Dorotheus ever closer to Classical learning both philosophical (e.g. Aristotle, the Stoics) and medical, foregrounding elements which seemed congruent to their knowledge of ancient philosophy and medicine and their own interests. This gives insight into their own era, but also into debates about Dorotheus' own scholarship, which Champion argues might be appropriately understood as both Classical and monastic. Thus Classical, patristic, Jesuit and finally Counter-Reformation strands of thought entwined in the creation and consumption of Dorotheus in Latin.

Nigel Westbrook with Rene Van Meeuwen outlines a different form of translation in the imperial capital, the conversion of Byzantine to Ottoman Constantinople in the century after 1453 as seen in the Lorck Prospect, a panorama drawn from Pera looking across the Golden Horn c. 1555–1562. Though the Ottoman palaces and mosques loom large in this image, Westbrook and Van Meeuwen show how Byzantine buildings can be reconstructed among them, and argue for continuity of the physical urban landscape with some notable exceptions. It is difficult to separate deliberate reference to past architecture from common needs, especially as Ottoman architecture grew up so strongly influenced by Byzantium. Yet it is clear from archaeology and literary sources as well as the panorama that Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Constantinople shared many features: narrow but straight streets, covered markets, and neighbourhoods centred on religious buildings. The seawalls were also an important constant from Byzantine to Ottoman times. Both Ottoman sultans and Lorck himself emphasized various aspects of the change in religion and authority in the physical texture of Constantinople, but these changes were made alongside a growing population largely inhabiting the Byzantine urban infrastructure on the large and small scale.

Alfred Vincent's chapter examines two Greek writers who lived in Wallachia, modern Romania, in the early 17th century, and composed vernacular Greek verse chronicles about contemporary history, drawing on the Byzantine Greek poetic tradition in their Greek, Romanian, Vlach, Albanian and Slavonic-speaking contexts. He first summarizes the history of this region at the northern edge of Byzantine culture, under native rulers but in the 17th century pulled between Ottoman and Habsburg authority, with a growing Greek population in the upper class. Stavrinou the Vestiar (Treasurer) of Michael the Brave hailed from northern Epirus, and honored his patron's 'valiant deeds'

in Greek verse shortly after Michael was assassinated in 1601. Stavrinos managed to combine historical events with mythical deeds and popular poetry to translate Michael into the realm of Achilles or Belisarius, and made him a Christian hero too. Stavrinos' poem was published in 1638 in Venice, together with a continuation up to 1618, a more general historical verse chronicle by Matthew, Metropolitan of Myra, also an Epirot who settled in Wallachia. He also uses vernacular Greek, but with more religious references, and with advice for the Greek ('Roman') community in Wallachia. Their popularity (into the 19th century) lay in how both authors combined aspects of Byzantine and contemporary culture in their verse chronicles, and urged restoration of Christian rule in Constantinople by different means.

Penelope Buckley draws comparisons between Yeats' translation of Byzantine culture in his theory of history, *A Vision*, and his early twentieth-century poems, *Sailing to Byzantium* and *Byzantium*. She shows how he is intrigued by the eras just before and under Justinian, on the one hand, and under and just after the last iconoclast emperor Theophilos, on the other hand. Knowledge of these two eras of Byzantine culture throws into relief how Yeats played with their ambiguities of religion and art to evoke and employ tensions of antiquity and imagery. He returns repeatedly to the golden tree with *automata* birds built by Theophilos under the influence of Abbasid ceremonial and Persian decorative arts, but also references gold-ground mosaic icons. Byzantium is central to his theory of history, being situated between East and West, reason and religion. Buckley shows how his poetic reception of Byzantine culture provides readers with a remarkable translation of ideas and images from Byzantium into modern significance.

Finally, Bronwen Neil concludes the volume with a chapter on the current state of Byzantine studies in a global context and in Australia. Technological breakthroughs have allowed the sharing of texts, both primary and secondary, across the world and between disciplines, in ways that have allowed Byzantine scholars to overcome the tyranny of physical distance to a great degree. The field has broadened to include Late Antique studies and comparative studies that have relevance for the modern period. The sharing of knowledge via translations has been a vital part of the process of broadening Byzantine horizons, and Neil highlights the role that Australians have played in keeping Byzantium alive through the publication of translations of Byzantine texts in English.

In any volume of collected essays there will be gaps, and many important subjects that remain uncovered. For the non-comprehensive nature of our study, we crave the reader's indulgence, and offer instead spotlights on various moments in the long and at times tortuous process of translating Byzantine culture for later ages and across various contexts up to the current day.

Narrating the Reign of Constantine in Byzantine Chronicles

Roger Scott

As part of a symposium held at St Andrews in 1992 on the use of the image of Constantine in later Byzantium and particularly by its emperors, I examined how and why the depiction of Constantine the great and his reign changed from the 6th to the 9th centuries in the chronicles of Malalas and Theophanes.¹ This chapter will extend that discussion by examining and trying to explain the further changes to Constantine's representation in the later-ninth-century chronicle of George the Monk and the (probably) late-eleventh-century chronicle of Kedrenos.² I am not concerned with Constantine himself but with the later Byzantine 'mythical' version, and developments in its translation, for which the real Constantine is simply not relevant.

Many of the speakers at the St Andrews symposium used and rightly praised an article by the late Alexander Kazhdan entitled 'Constantin imaginaire' published in English (despite its title) some five years earlier.³ In that article the great Russian Byzantinist, after noting and explaining why Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* was scarcely read in later Byzantium, examined the legendary aspects of Constantine presented in several ninth-century hagiographies. He drew attention to a fictional ancestry, concern whether Constantine's mother Helen was a prostitute, Constantine's orthodox baptism by Pope Sylvester in Rome and various embellishments to Helen's supposed discovery of the True Cross. Kazhdan subsequently also devoted a chapter in his posthumously published *History of Byzantine Literature 650–850* (1999) to 'The mediaeval Constantine legend' including a section on 'the imaginary Constantine', which covers much the same material from a slightly different angle.

Both Kazhdan's article and his later chapter concentrate on the 9th century, putting together the various strands from earlier developments that make up

1 Scott 1994, 57–71.

2 My original intention was to include Zonaras (mid 12th century) but for reasons of space I just make occasional references to his variations from Kedrenos.

3 Kazhdan 1987, 196–250. Kazhdan's use of a French title for his article in English was presumably aimed at picking up on Gilbert Dagron's influential *Constantinople imaginaire*, published three years earlier in 1984.

that century's complex image of Constantine. The papers at the St Andrews conference dealt mainly with how the image of Constantine changed across the period from the 4th to the 13th centuries, and with how these later periods of Byzantium exploited links to the holy Constantine in various ways that were real or invented, so that emperors could present themselves as 'New Constantines' in much the same way as Roman and Byzantine emperors linked themselves to Augustus and Caesar first by name and then by title. Yet in that excellent volume George the Monk and Kedrenos each only get a single mention (in different papers), and neither of those references is about their treatment of Constantine. Likewise Kazhdan largely ignores George the Monk despite his belonging to the 9th century, while Kedrenos lay outside his time frame. Yet George, whose version of Constantine provides the basis for Kedrenos, appears to be responsible for a major stage in what was otherwise a fairly simple but clear progression in Byzantine chronicles of how the myths about the first Christian emperor were presented and understood. Hence, I trust, the justification for now looking at George the Monk's and Kedrenos' Constantine, since they are between them (in my view) responsible for changing (or translating) the Byzantine understanding and representation of the great Constantine quite considerably.

It is worth first setting out that simple progression in outline before examining it in more detail. We can begin with Malalas, the earliest universal chronicler to survive, who in the 6th century was the most important innovator to the Greek tradition through his introducing the essential element of the myth with his simple statement of Constantine's baptism early in his reign in Rome by Pope Sylvester rather than the true version, supplied by all earlier near-contemporary accounts, that the baptism took place on his deathbed near Nicomedia, with most sources also stating that the baptism was by the Arian bishop Eusebius. Malalas keeps it as a simple single-sentence statement of supposed fact without discussion:

καὶ νηστεύσας καὶ κατηνηχθεὶς ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ Σιλβέστρου, ἐπισκόπου Ῥώμης, αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ Ἑλένη καὶ πάντες οἱ συγγενεῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ φίλοι αὐτοῦ καὶ πλῆθος ἄλλων πολλῶν Ῥωμαίων. καὶ ἐγένετο χριστιανὸς ὁ αὐτὸς Κωνσταντῖνος βασιλεὺς.

After fasting and having taken instruction, [Constantine] was baptized by Sylvester, bishop of Rome—he himself and his mother Helen and all his relatives and his friends and a whole host of other Romans. And so the emperor Constantine became a Christian.⁴

4 Malalas, 13.2 (Thurn 2000, 243).

We can omit the seventh-century *Chronicon Paschale* as it was seemingly not read by Theophanes or later chroniclers (and was probably not available to them). So the next chronicler is Theophanes who in the early 9th century expanded and developed Malalas' account with arguments and narrative flair to demonstrate the validity (and importance) of Constantine's orthodoxy. Third, George the Monk in the late 9th century was the real researcher. He was probably responsible for introducing to Greek (and certainly to the chronicle tradition) the Sylvester legend from the *Vita Silvestri*. This expands considerably both Malalas' few 'facts' and Theophanes' arguments with lively stories and theological analyses. George himself largely ignored secular history throughout his χρονικὸν σύντομον or 'brief chronicle' (as he terms it) of 800 pages, so his narrative of Constantine particularly emphasizes ecclesiastical and theological material.

It is George's version that lies behind the later versions, those of Kedrenos (late 11th century or early 12th) and Zonaras (mid 12th century) and also Scutariotes' thirteenth-century chronicle covering Creation to 1261. Kedrenos exploits George the Monk naturally enough as the basis for the ecclesiastical narrative of Constantine and combines this with secular material and a chronological framework that is almost certainly taken from Pseudo-Symeon (an as-yet-unedited chronicle of the late 10th century, surviving in a single Paris manuscript),⁵ which is in essence Theophanes' material. This applies not only to Kedrenos' account of Constantine but to his entire chronicle from Creation to 811 CE,⁶ though it needs stressing that throughout his chronicle he also creatively worked in extra material beyond George and Pseudo-Symeon drawn from his wide reading. So Kedrenos' account is a genuine universal chronicle with lots of dates but it also contains rather more theological and ecclesiastical material than earlier chronicles. And finally, Zonaras in the 12th century likewise is based on George the Monk and Pseudo-Symeon (and hence Theophanes), but has a much more reserved approach to fanciful stories as well as making use of some of the real sources from the 4th and 5th centuries. His is a decidedly more sober and sophisticated narrative, but still includes the myths of his predecessors.

Although the tradition is thus fairly simple, it is worth making a more detailed analysis of what happens in these various stages to indicate the nature of the changes which in turn enables discussion of the reasons for them.

5 Paris gr. 1712, folia 18v-272.

6 From 811 to 1057 Kedrenos relied exclusively on Skylitzes.

Malalas

For Malalas in the 6th century⁷ the significance of Constantine is essentially his function in God's plan for humankind as the first Christian emperor and especially as the founder of Constantinople. Though Constantine was undoubtedly highly important for Malalas' presentation of universal history, Malalas in fact tells us very little of Constantine himself. After relating his vision of the Cross and his orthodox baptism by Sylvester in Rome, Malalas moves straight to a single sentence on his victories over the Persians and the establishment of peace both internally and externally. Malalas covers all of this in under a page of the six pages that he devotes to Constantine. His main emphasis (and the remainder of his narrative) is then devoted almost entirely to Constantine's building and administrative arrangements, including material on Byzas, the legendary founder of Byzantium, and Anthousa, the new *tyche* of the city.

Malalas simply was not interested in whether Constantine was orthodox or not, or at least that was not an issue of any relevance for his chronicle. What was important was simply that Constantine was a Christian. The internal divisions within Christianity were of no concern to him, so (for instance) he virtually ignored ecumenical synods. (Indeed he covered the first four in under half a page *in toto* with just twelve words to deal with the vital fourth synod at Chalcedon in 451, while he ignored the fifth ecumenical synod of 553 altogether). What he was concerned with was the victory of Christianity as a whole.

It is, however, Malalas' account of Constantine's baptism that is the key to the tradition of the Constantine legend in Byzantium. All of Malalas' normal sources in the 6th century clearly offered him the historically accurate version of Constantine's baptism being in or near Nicomedia on his deathbed, and with most also saying it was performed by Eusebius, the Arian bishop of Nicomedia. That is the version in Theodore Lector, written early in the 6th century and based on our best sources, the fifth-century church historians, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret, while Eusebius also in *Vita Constantini* had stated that the baptism took place on Constantine's deathbed in Nicomedia but without mentioning who performed it.⁸ It is also the version retained by the *Chronicon Paschale* in the early 7th century which elsewhere follows either Malalas himself or his sources. Yet Malalas provides a quite different version:

7 See Scott 1994. My treatment of Malalas and Theophanes here is consequently only given in outline. This and the following Malalas paragraphs are largely taken verbatim from that paper (Scott 1994, 61).

8 Euseb. VC 4.62, Socr. 1.38, Soz. 2.34, Theod. 1.32 and hence Theodore Lector, 51 (Hansen 1971, 27).

namely that Constantine was baptized early in his reign, in Rome, and by the properly orthodox Pope Sylvester. With the correct version available both in sources normally used by Malalas and still used later by *Chronicon Paschale*, a source that also employed Malalas' sources, it is clear both that Malalas' rejection of the accurate version was deliberate and that it was he who was responsible for introducing into Greek the Byzantine myth of Constantine's early baptism in Rome by Pope Sylvester. We do not know where Malalas found this version, but there is reason (rather than evidence) for suggesting that it came from a Syriac source.⁹ Yet although Malalas is revolutionary in introducing his version of the baptism, there is no reason to think that he himself wanted to make a particular point by it. For him it was simply a matter of fact. But once introduced the early baptism became a matter of importance for later chroniclers.

Malalas does not expand on his new version of the baptism at all. He simply mentions the early baptism as fact in a single short sentence. But since *Chronicon Paschale* continued to provide the accurate version of Constantine being baptized by the Arian Eusebius almost a century later, and Photios in the late 9th century, probably following Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*, also accepted that Constantine's baptism took place at the end of his life in Bithynia (though Photios believed it was orthodox and not by the Arian Eusebius),¹⁰ it is clear that Malalas failed to win complete acceptance of the myth, which may explain why Theophanes in the early 9th century felt that he needed to do something more to gain acceptance for the myth (which he clearly felt to be the truth). The early orthodox baptism of the holy Constantine was vital for his interpretation of history.

9 Contra Kazhdan who believed that Malalas must have known of the *Acta Silvestri*. Had that been so, Malalas would surely have reflected more of the *Acta* than merely the baptism. And if the *Acta* both existed and were known in the East at this stage, there would surely have been some reflection of this somewhere in sources of the next two centuries (and particularly in Theophanes). The absence of any such sign makes it far more likely that Malalas had access to a Syriac source, possibly Arian in outlook, that claimed this false version of the baptism, but was unaware of the variety of other stories included in the *Acta Silvestri*, presumably because they had either not yet been created or were not available in Greek. The early baptism is also claimed in an Armenian version of the *Acta Silvestri*, perhaps composed as early as 480; see Conybeare 1901, 493–494; Conybeare 1902, 400. Cf. Milner 1994, 73–81 for an early sixth-century depiction in Constantinople of the baptism by Sylvester, and Fowden 1994, 148–151 for the traditions of Constantine's baptism.

10 Photios, *Homily* 15.8 (Mango 1958, 255), accepts the late baptism in Bithynia but insists on its being orthodox, rejecting Arian involvement as a heretical lie.

Theophanes

In contrast to Malalas, Theophanes was mainly concerned with the necessity of Orthodoxy and the horrors of heresy, with himself being embroiled in the controversy over Iconoclasm. His chronicle needed to demonstrate that history showed that God ensured success under orthodox emperors and that national disaster was the almost inevitable consequence of heresy.¹¹ He also faced the problem of needing to use and overcome sources that were Arian or iconoclast in their presentation and hence needing to rephrase such heretical material to reflect the correct orthodox position. So although he followed Malalas as his only source for Constantine's baptism, he had to adapt and expand Malalas' simple version to emphasize Constantine's orthodoxy and legitimacy, which Malalas omits or takes for granted.

Whereas Malalas had just the single two-line sentence on the early baptism, Theophanes, picking up the story in the early 9th century, devotes most of a page to it, not that he wastes paper on simple description.¹² Rather he is well-aware of the true version of Constantine's Arian baptism (not that he believed it to be true), so he spends an argumentative page demolishing the story to his own satisfaction as an Arian forgery before going on to demolish as well another supposed Arian-and-pagan story that Constantine was illegitimate. It is rare for a chronicler to resort to argument rather than simply stating the facts, so clearly this was an issue of some importance for Theophanes. Indeed he returns to the baptism when he gets to Constantine's death, again dismissing the Arian story and giving a cross-reference to his earlier discussion. Clearly Constantine's baptism was still an issue in the early 9th century, but it does seem that Theophanes' demonstration of the truth (as he believed) of the early mythical baptism by Sylvester in Rome largely settled matters in Byzantium, so on the rare occasions when the issue is raised later on, it is Theophanes' argument that is quoted to reject the Arian baptism.¹³

George the Monk

So that was the situation when George the Monk (or GM) came to write his chronicle in the later 9th century. GM in some ways is the odd one out among

¹¹ I have discussed this in several places, most recently in Scott 2016. Cf. Scott 1996 and 2006.

¹² Discussed in greater detail in Scott 1994, including Theophanes' need to compete against an Arian version.

¹³ E. g. Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 476.5–15). It is also preserved in the *Bios* (Guidi 1906, 30.2–13).

Byzantine chroniclers as he is also rather more of a researcher. Unlike other chroniclers who tried to cover everything (and so produce what are known as universal chronicles), GM was only interested in religious history, so he omits secular history as much as he can, and tends to be highly abusive about secular matters when he feels forced to include such information at all. But despite omitting most secular history he still produced a huge chronicle, with the length largely coming from copying verbatim huge documents that he had evidently uncovered in his researches. He may well have been a teacher at the Patriarch's school in Constantinople and he does seem to have done some hunting for texts in its library. So he is for instance our only source for the Greek version of the acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Synod held under Justinian in the mid 6th century, and it must have taken some effort to find the text of its acts some 300 years after the synod took place. For Constantine his innovation is to include in a Greek chronicle for the first time material from the *Vita Silvestri*—which again he must have found by some solid archival work.

The *Vita Silvestri* may well have been created in Latin (and 'create' is the necessary verb) or possibly in Syriac (or even in both languages) as early as the 4th century and certainly by the eighth.¹⁴ But GM seems to be the first to make use of it in Greek in the late 9th century, though we also start getting it being used in *vitae* of Constantine at about this time¹⁵ but not in so much detail and the dating of the *vitae* is very uncertain. Based on the *Vita Silvestri*, we now get a much-expanded version of Constantine's baptism with Sylvester playing a more significant role.¹⁶ Instead of Malalas' simple single sentence we now get in GM a whole story about the baptism that seemingly takes place before Constantine even sets out for Rome to gain his victory over Maxentius. Constantine, suffering from leprosy for which neither magi nor doctors can help, is told by abominable pagan priests (εἰδώλων μιερεῖς) to take a bath in blood acquired by slaughtering lots of breast-feeding babies. The children are collected from across his province on Constantine's imperial orders, but after seeing and questioning the grieving mothers Constantine of course thinks better of it, explaining to the senate (where, one wonders) that it is far better for

14 For *Vita Silvestri* I remain conscious of our relying on the edition of 1660, albeit by the great François Combefis but still more than 350 years old. Combefis' edition presents the Greek and his Latin translation in parallel columns.

15 E. g. Codex angelicus 22 (Opitz 1934, 535–593).

16 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 485.4–487.20), cf. *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 273–282), which offers a rather different context, where an unnamed emperor (but presumably the still pagan Constantine) requires Christians to sacrifice whereupon Constantine (already emperor in Rome) is afflicted with leprous elephantiasis.

him to continue to suffer than to commit such cruelty, and so instead he provides transport to the mothers to take their children home along with extra gifts. That night Peter and Paul, who are unknown to Constantine, explain to him in a vision that, because of his mercy, he can now obtain both bodily and especially spiritual health (οὐ μόνον σωματικὴν ἔξεις υἰεῖαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχικὴν ὅτι μάλιστα) should he seek out Saint Sylvester on Mount Serapion.¹⁷ Sylvester not only confirms the identity of Peter and Paul to a hesitant Constantine by providing recognizable icons of them but then also baptizes Constantine, resulting in the leprous spots falling off like fish scales as he arose healthy from the baptismal pool. Thereupon senate and people acclaim the God of the Christians, and his mother Helen (to whom we shall return) as well as his family and friends are also baptized.¹⁸

The early baptism has clearly grown in significance considerably since Malalas' brief statement. In GM's narrative it is only now that Constantine receives a deputation from some Romans to come to Rome and deliver them from the evils of Maxentius, leading to his vision of the Cross, his victory over Maxentius and so the beginning of his Christian rule, all this in just nine lines.¹⁹ So the baptism is not only given much greater attention but is seen as the necessary catalyst and pre-condition of Constantine's reign rather than an event that later follows his vision of the Cross and victory over Maxentius. GM closes his book 8 with a typological comparison of Maxentius and Pharaoh drowning in the Tiber and Red Sea respectively, taken from Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History*.²⁰

Book 9 opens with a brief but crowded account of Constantine's actual activities as a Christian emperor, only slightly supplementing what was in his source, Theodore Lector.²¹ These measures include recall of banished Christians, destruction of temples, building of churches, transfer of temples to Christian clergy, restricting army and public service positions to Christians alone, fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays with Sundays honoured as a day of rest, forbidding Jews from buying servants and from sacrificing, depicting the Cross on coins, and banning crucifixion, all of which he compresses into fourteen lines.²² GM then returns to *Vita Silvestri* to exploit the emphasis on

17 Mount Soracte in *Vita Silvestri*.

18 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 485.3–487.20).

19 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 487.21–488.5). He then expands upon Constantine's activities as a Christian emperor, at 489.23–490.12.

20 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 488.6–489.7), cf. Eusebius, *HE* 9.9.

21 Theodore Lector frag.5 (Hansen 1971, 3–4), itself based on Sozomen, 1.8.

22 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 489.23–490.12).

Sylvester by relating Sylvester's miraculous killing of a gigantic dragon under the Capitol by simply uttering Christ's name.²³ He then introduces a lengthy and remarkable debate of almost five pages, arranged by Constantine, between 120 Jewish priests and scribes on one side²⁴ against Sylvester alone, again based on *Vita Silvestri*.²⁵ The debate allows GM to demonstrate via Sylvester that the Jews have got it all wrong and that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the prophets. Sylvester completes his theological victory by then winning a miracle contest in which his Jewish opponent had with the help of the devil used magic to kill a wild bull just by whispering God's name in its ear (seemingly paralleling Sylvester's killing of the dragon). Sylvester, after earnest prayer, promptly restored the bull to life, a far more impressive achievement, as well as rendering the ferocious bull meek and mild, and also leading to the immediate conversion to Christianity of the crowd of Jews present, all of which takes up a further three and a bit pages.²⁶

GM next turns to the foundation of Constantinople where he notes that Constantine, wanting to build a city in his own name in the East, is instructed by God to do so in Byzantium.²⁷ GM does not know the new foundation myth of the later chroniclers (on which see below on Kedrenos), and his precise sources are not clear but have similarities to Theodore Lector, Malalas and *Chronicon Paschale*. He does, however, offer intriguing and otherwise unattested 'facts', that, because of its size, it took three years to get Constantine's column from Ilium to Byzantium and a further year to get it from the sea to the forum despite Constantine's unremitting pressure and distribution of large

23 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 490.18–491.11). In *Vita Silvestri* this is related earlier, before Constantine's baptism, and at much greater length (four columns of text) (Combefis 1660, 269–272).

24 *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 293), states that, though 120 Jews are gathered in Rome, only twelve are chosen for the debate. (A page earlier it is the high priest who selects a dozen skilled Jews who were fluent in Greek and Latin as well as Hebrew). In *Vita Silvestri* (but not in GM) they are named along with their professions: two *magistri* (Abiathar, Ionas), two scribes (Godolias, Aunan), two doctors (Doek, Cusek), two lawyers (Benoin, Ariel), two Pharisees (Iubal, Tharra), and two priests (Sileo, Zambres). In *Vita Silvestri* they each speak in turn as listed above, some several times in their turn.

25 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 491.12–496.3); *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 294–326), so GM has abbreviated considerably.

26 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 496.3–499.6); *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 326–335) with the *vita* ending a page later at Sylvester's death, so the debate and miracle of the bull provide the climax of the work.

27 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 499.7–501.4).

sums of money; Constantine's evident frustration with these delays adds a nicely unexpected touch. Constantine does, however, manage to place in the foundations of his column the twelve baskets used for feeding the 5000, together with relics of the Cross and of saints,²⁸ although it is not until a page later that Helen visits Jerusalem and discovers the Cross. But that should merely remind us that GM was not really trying to provide a chronological account and the paragraph on Helen is there to offer a brief account of her life and her beneficial effect on her son.²⁹

GM next provides a fairly complex narrative of the First Ecumenical Synod at Nicaea (325 CE), called because Constantine saw that Arius was disturbing the church.³⁰ It is preceded by various portents: an earthquake in Campania; eclipse of the sun; a plague of snakes; and the Jews attempting to rebuild the temple for which Constantine disperses them, cutting off the ears of some as a warning.³¹ Attention is then given to the gentle Constantine's generous measures to gather and treat the bishops, especially those who had suffered during the persecutions;³² then a brief outline of Arius' heresy.³³ All this takes up a couple of pages before a rather longer story of a miracle, linked to the synod, in which a totally uneducated bishop gets the better of a highly learned and skilled pagan lawyer, resulting in the latter's enthusiastic conversion to Christianity.³⁴ The story appears to be just an expansion of a much briefer version where the unlettered Alexander, patriarch of Constantinople, likewise silences a pagan philosopher, a story that had previously appeared in Sozomen, Theodore Lector and Theophanes, and is also still retained separately later in GM's account.³⁵ The expanded version first appears in Rufinus³⁶ but it is GM who has introduced it to the chronicle tradition. After this GM concludes his treatment of the synod with just fifteen lines on its actual proceedings, which is still more than it received from his predecessors.³⁷

28 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 500.13–15).

29 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 501.15–502.11).

30 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 502.16–509.18).

31 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 502.16–503.8).

32 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 503.9–504.17).

33 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 504.18–505.16).

34 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 505.17–507.15).

35 Soz., 1.18; Theodore Lector, 14 (Hansen 1971, 7.21–28); Theophanes, AM 5816 (de Boor 1883, 23). GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 523.6–12).

36 Rufinus, *HE*, 1.3 (PL 21, 469–470); cf. Gelasius of Cyzicus, 2.13 (PG 85, 1252–1256).

37 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 509.3–18).

What follows is the remarkable consequence of Constantine's error in falling for Arius' deception and then, trusting Arian accusations, banishing the patriarch of Alexandria, Athanasius, for not receiving Arius back into communion.³⁸ GM provides a quite remarkable argument here on the need for avoiding hasty judgement, over six pages in length and full of impressive biblical and patristic testimony, largely from a combination of Isidore of Pelusium and the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions*.³⁹ An account of the trials and tribulations of Athanasius under various emperors follows, again supported by much similar testimony and many biblical *exempla*.⁴⁰ GM then works in the short story of Alexander silencing a pagan philosopher, mentioned above, and then a little on the monk St Antony,⁴¹ before finally rejecting the notion of Constantine's deathbed baptism as an Arian forgery (where he follows Theophanes).⁴² GM then concludes his account of Constantine by another lengthy analysis of the theology associated with the First Ecumenical Synod, this time some seven pages in length and again taken almost entirely from Isidore of Pelusium.⁴³

Since GM avoids dates, chronological gaps in his narrative are not immediately obvious. His narrative is instead made up of a collection of episodes stressing Constantine's Christianity which also give him the opportunity for lengthy digressions on theology: Sylvester's debate with the Jews (five pages), the Nicaea miracle debate (two pages), the need for avoiding hasty judgment (six pages), and the final theological discussion of Nicaea (seven pages) make up over 40% of the narrative, but apart from the final two theological tracts, these are softened by lively narrative episodes such as the whole baptism story, Sylvester's miraculous killing of the gigantic dragon, his resurrection of the ferocious bull after its devilish killing by the Jew and the miraculous debate (linked to the First Ecumenical Synod) between a rustic bishop and the pagan scholar. All of this is new to the Byzantine chronicle representation of Constantine, but GM has created it by exploiting texts that had not been used or were not available earlier.

38 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 509.19–510.13).

39 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 510.14–516.8). Identification of this and other biblical and patristic testimonies is handily provided in the subtext of the de Boor & Wirth (1978) edition.

40 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 516.9–523.2).

41 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 523.13–525.10).

42 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 525.14–526.11).

43 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 526.12–533.20).

Kedrenos

About 200 years later Kedrenos, to whom we now turn, demonstrably made use of everything in GM's account of Constantine. It is generally accepted that Kedrenos wrote scarcely a word of his own throughout his lengthy chronicle (some 1,500 pages in Bekker's Bonn edition), though he certainly rearranged the material that he plagiarized from a wider range of reading than is generally assumed. So here it becomes clear that Kedrenos, despite copying much of his account verbatim from GM, must have realized that GM had abbreviated *Vita Silvestri* in his account of Constantine, so Kedrenos had consequently set about getting hold of and using the complete original text, and in one place chose to add a whole section of it after GM's account broke off (see below). His discovery and use of *Vita Silvestri* is also consistent with other evidence elsewhere that he, like GM, read widely and found ways of introducing material from this reading into his chronicle. What is also important is how Kedrenos manipulates this material to create his own interpretation.

The single most obvious difference from GM's account of Constantine is that Kedrenos combined it with material taken from the chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon, which is a feature throughout his chronicle from Creation onwards. In essence Kedrenos was writing a traditional universal chronicle whereas GM had produced a sort of history of religion that omitted secular history. So Kedrenos simply supplied the necessary secular material and dates from Pseudo-Symeon, though the process was probably the other way round—Kedrenos will have used Pseudo-Symeon as his base with its chronological structure and outline of secular events that had been drawn from the standard stock of universal chronicles, to which he added theological material taken from GM to create what was still a basic universal chronicle but one with decidedly more theology than in previous such works. Pseudo-Symeon's chronicle for this period is largely derived from Theophanes (though it does also include material from elsewhere), so the information Kedrenos got from Pseudo-Symeon is mainly Theophanes' material which, at least for Constantine as mentioned earlier, is a mixture of Malalas' information expanded considerably by Theophanes' arguments (rather than facts) supplemented by Theophanes' imagination.

Kedrenos sensibly ignores GM's chronology for Constantine, instead adapting the narrative of *Vita Silvestri* to the chronology of Pseudo-Symeon as best he can, though this creates difficulties for him. He begins with Constantine moving against Maxentius after being invited by some Romans in year 6 of his reign, having his vision of the Cross and its "by this conquer" inscription, gaining his victory and then acting as a Christian emperor by having the relics of martyrs properly buried, and only at this stage (in year 7) being baptized by Sylvester

(instead of the baptism coming first in this sequence). The baptism is again given due emphasis with the story of Constantine's leprosy, but in Kedrenos it is Jewish doctors who suggest the blood bath of breast-feeding babies. Making the doctors Jews is certainly Kedrenos' deliberate innovation as both in his immediate sources, *Vita Silvestri* and GM, and in all other accounts they are pagan priests.⁴⁴ The innovation is consistent with his approach of highlighting Jewish failings at critical moments in history.⁴⁵ An abbreviated version of Constantine's vision of Peter and Paul leads to his baptism by Sylvester and his cure with the leprous spots falling like scales as he emerged from the baptismal pool. Countless others are also baptized including his son Crispus but, unlike GM, there is no mention of Helen at the baptism, on which see below. After the baptism Kedrenos first provides a paragraph that he takes from Pseudo-Symeon (so in effect from Theophanes), rejecting the accurate late baptism, before returning to GM and the *Vita Silvestri* for Sylvester's miraculous killing of the gigantic dragon under the Capitol. Next comes secular material from Pseudo-Symeon for years 9 to 14 (though year 14 has Constantine dealing with Christian matters, abbreviated from GM's crowded list, mentioned earlier), before Kedrenos introduces a rather unexpected explanatory sentence: "But it is necessary to say a few things about the conversation of Saint Sylvester."⁴⁶

Kedrenos has had to introduce this rare sentence of his own before he can relate Sylvester's debate with the Jews and the resurrection of the ferocious bull, as he needs to excuse his breaking chronological order and now reverting

44 There is likewise no indication of the doctors being depicted as Jews in known early pictorial versions of Constantine's refusal to bathe in the blood of infants, whereas the Jews involved in the debate with Sylvester are clearly depicted as such. The various stories of *Vita Silvestri* are splendidly depicted in the Chapel of San Silvestro at Santi Quattro Coronati in Rome (c. 1246) and also in the Church of San Silvestro, Tivoli (late 12th/early 13th cent). These cycles are probably based on *Vita Silvestri* perhaps with additions from the sources used to compile Voragine's *Golden Legend*, which appeared about 1260.

The Santi Quattro Coronati cycle, in particular, has been associated with papal versus imperial political aspirations as it features prominently a scene confirming the supposed Donation of Constantine. Later cycles such as those in Cologne Cathedral have also been linked with contemporary political events. This San Silvestro cycle and those in medieval stained glass programs such as at Chartres Cathedral, as well as the cycle painted by the 14th-century Florentine artist Maso di Banco in a Chapel of Santa Croce, Florence, are based on Voragine's *Golden Legend*. I am much indebted here to Margaret Riddle.

45 See Burke, Scott and Tuffin forthcoming, but a more detailed study of this aspect of Kedrenos is needed.

46 Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 478.12–13): ἀλλὰ δεόν ἐστὶ περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Σιλβέστρου διαλέξεως ὀλίγα τινὰ εἰπεῖν.

from year 14 to year 4, which he took to be the date that *Vita Silvestri* provides for the debate⁴⁷ and which Kedrenos faithfully retains, though year 4 was well before Constantine reached Italy and so not at all suited to Pseudo-Symeon's chronology. Sadly, he need not have been troubled as *Vita Silvestri*'s date is a specific reference to Constantine's fourth consulship (i.e. year 9, or 313 CE) which Kedrenos has not understood. But it does reveal nevertheless Kedrenos' urge to stick to chronological order as much as he can and his awareness of the difficulty of adapting the awkward chronology of *Vita Silvestri* and GM to his model of Pseudo-Symeon.

Kedrenos' narration of the debate and story of the bull is recognizably the same in outline as that of GM, as one might expect, but it is also here that it becomes clear that Kedrenos had found a copy of *Vita Silvestri* and chosen to follow it instead, as there are significant differences. 'Many' (rather than 120) Jews ask Constantine for a debate with twelve Christians but Sylvester points out that one Christian, guided by God, is all that is needed, and during the debate eight of the individual Jews are named (as are all twelve in *Vita Silvestri*), whereas GM provides no names of the Jews involved in the debate and names only Zambres in the story of the bull. When GM breaks off the debate,⁴⁸ Kedrenos continues to follow *Vita Silvestri* for a further ten columns of text, though he abbreviates it considerably to about two pages.⁴⁹ More significant is that following Sylvester's resurrection of the bull, he has Helen naming the spot as 'the place of repentance' (τόπος μετανοίας).

We recall that Kedrenos did not mention Helen being baptized with Constantine despite GM expressly saying so, and we can now learn why, for he is here pointedly correcting GM in line with *Vita Silvestri* without actually saying so. When GM had Helen baptized at the same time as Constantine, he was in fact altering the version of his source by simply adding a sentence on Helen's baptism to the end of *Vita Silvestri*'s account.⁵⁰ In *Vita Silvestri*, however, Helen not only was not baptized with Constantine but, then living in Bithynia with her grandsons among a Jewish community, actually wrote a long motherly letter to her emperor son after his baptism pointing out that Christ was a condemned criminal and suggesting that he consider Judaism instead.⁵¹

47 *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 293.7).

48 At Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 488.18).

49 *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 316.11–325.22); Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 488.18–491.5) returns to GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 496.4) for the bull story.

50 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 487.18–20).

51 *Vita Silvestri* (Combefis 1660, 288–290).

It is Constantine's letter in reply⁵² that leads to his arranging the debate, and it is only now, persuaded by Sylvester's dramatic resurrection of the ferocious bull, that Helen was converted and baptized. As her conversion is implied rather than expressly stated, Kedrenos clarifies this by having his Helen call it the place of repentance, lifting the phrase from *Vita Sylvestri*,⁵³ and then strengthens this neatly, again without precisely saying so, by including Helen in the rejoicing that follows, where apart from this inclusion (as "the most blessed Augusta") and adding the epithet "Christ-loving" to Constantine, Kedrenos follows GM verbatim:

καὶ τούτου γενομένου ἐχάρη μεγάλως ὃ τε φιλόχριστος βασιλεὺς καὶ ἡ μακαριωτάτη Αὐγουστα καὶ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος τοῦ λαοῦ, ὥστε ἐπὶ ὥρας δύο κρᾶζειν ἅπαντας «μέγας ὁ θεὸς τῶν Χριστιανῶν».

When this had happened there was great rejoicing by the Christ-loving emperor and the most blessed Augusta and the entire mass of the people, so that for two hours they all chanted "Great is the God of the Christians."⁵⁴

It is clearly a deliberate insertion that shows that Helen now is certainly a Christian as well as linking Helen more closely to Constantine. That it is a deliberate insertion is made even clearer since Kedrenos now returns to *Vita Sylvestri* to complete the year and the story.⁵⁵ But Kedrenos is also careful not to say too much. There is nothing here that precisely denies that Helen may have been baptized earlier along with Constantine, as GM had stated. There is also nothing that specifically states that Helen had been linked to Judaism, as *Vita Sylvestri* relates, or that she is only baptized after the miraculous resurrection of the bull. So although the natural interpretation, in line with Kedrenos' use of *Vita Sylvestri*, must be that Helen had been a supporter of the Jews and was only converted and baptized following Sylvester's persuasive miracle, there is nothing that specifically says so. Kedrenos still allows a reader who has not read *Vita Sylvestri*, which he could reasonably expect to be true of his entire

52 *Vita Sylvestri* (Combefis 1660, 290–292).

53 *Vita Sylvestri* (Combefis 1660, 335.26). Kedrenos' characteristic change is to have his Helen falling at Sylvester's feet whereas in *Vita Sylvestri* she falls at his knees.

54 Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 495). Cf. GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 499.5–6). The rejoicing is itself reminiscent of the Ephesians chanting to Paul for two hours that "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" (Acts 19.34). On that acclamation and acclamations in general, see Roueché, 1984, 181–199.

55 *Vita Sylvestri* (Combefis 1660, 336.6–11).

audience, to assume with GM that Helen had long been a Christian and was never tainted with Judaism.

Kedrenos, who relies on GM throughout his chronicle, has here clearly recognised GM's achievement in introducing *Vita Silvestri* to a Byzantine audience but has then sought out this source for himself. He has as a result included portions of *Vita Silvestri* to extend GM's account of the debate and recognised that GM had altered *Vita Silvestri* to have Helen baptized with Constantine. Probably wanting to be faithful to both sources, he has omitted the bits that were awkward and produced a version that does not at any point actually contradict either *Vita Silvestri* or GM in what it does say, with presumably a safe assumption that his audience will not be aware of what he has not said.⁵⁶ Kedrenos was certainly a plagiarist, but not an unthinking one.

Having dealt with the debate with the Jews and the story of the bull Kedrenos returns with remarkable brevity to his proper chronology for years 14–18⁵⁷ at which point he relates Constantine's foundation of Constantinople. Here he introduces a new myth about Constantine, also found later in Zonaras and Scutariotes.

ἐν ταύταις ταῖς ἡμέραις εἰς μνήμην ἔρχεται τοῦ γενομένου πλησίον Ῥώμης ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου πρὸς αὐτὸν κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους προστάγματος, ὅπερ ἦν λέγοντος οἰκοδομήσαι τῇ θεοτόκῃ πόλιν ἐν ᾧ τόπῳ αὐτός ὑποδείξω σοι. καὶ δὴ τὰ κατὰ χώραν καὶ τόπους ἐρευνῶν τῇ Θεσσαλονίκῃ ἐπιβαίνει, καὶ τῷ τόπῳ ἀρεσθεὶς δυσὶ χρόνους ἐκεῖ διατρίβει. ναοὺς τε θαυμασίους καὶ λουτρὰ καὶ ὑδάτων εἰσαγωγὰς κατασκευασάμενος, ὡς εἶδε λοιμὸν ἐπιγενόμενον, ταύτην μὲν καταλιμπάνει, ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν Βιθυνῶν Χαλκηδὸνα ἔρχεται, ὑπὸ τῶν Περσῶν ἐξηδαφισμένην εὐρὼν ἀνοικοδομεῖν ἤρξατο. καὶ εὐθέως ἀετοὶ τοὺς τῶν τεχνιτῶν λίθους ἀρπάζοντες τῷ Βυζαντίῳ προσέριπτον. τούτου δὲ πολλάκις γενομένου ὑπὸ πάντων διαπορευμένου, εἰς τῶν ὑπηρετουμένων τῷ βασιλεῖ Εὐφρατᾶς λεγόμενος διασάφησεν ὡς ἐκεῖ φίλον ἐστὶ τῷ θεῷ τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ κτισθῆναι πόλιν. εὐθέως οὖν διαπεράσας, καὶ τὸν τρόπον κατιδὼν καὶ ἀποδεξάμενος, τὸν Εὐφρατᾶν ἐπιστάτην τοῦ ἔργου καταλιμπάνει μετὰ βαρείας δυνάμεως καὶ πλούτου πολλοῦ. καὶ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς κατὰ Περσῶν ἀποδημεῖ.

In those days he came to remember the instruction given to him near Rome by the Lord as he slept, of [the Lord] saying that 'a city should be

56 Scutariotes, 46, notes Helen's attachment to Judaism and both he and Zonaras, 13.2 record her baptism at this point.

57 Seemingly drawn directly from Theophanes rather than Pseudo-Symeon, which probably reflects a defect in our one surviving manuscript of Pseudo-Symeon.

built for the Theotokos in the place that I myself will point out.' And indeed in searching for sites around the country he set off for Thessaloniki, and liking the place he spent two years there. After constructing wonderful temples, baths and aqueducts there, when he saw that a plague had arrived he left and went to Chalcedon in Bithynia, and discovering that it had been utterly destroyed by the Persians he set about rebuilding it. But immediately eagles snatched the stones from the builders and dropped them in Byzantium. When this had happened a number of times and left everyone at a loss, one of the emperor's servants named Euphratas saw that this clearly was the place that God wanted for building a city for His mother. Having crossed over immediately and approving the site,⁵⁸ [the emperor] placed Euphratas in charge of the work with considerable authority and a lot of money, while the emperor himself set off against the Persians.⁵⁹

Whereas earlier chronicles simply mentioned that Constantine established Constantinople as a capital, this late version draws attention to it instead as God's choice as his especial city rather than Jerusalem, which again needs to be linked to the failings and disobedience of the Jews, already revealed in the Sylvester debate. Their disobedience is a subtly repeated feature of Kedrenos across his chronicle from his Old Testament narrative onwards with an implication that as a result God has transferred his allegiance from Jerusalem to Constantinople, the New Jerusalem, as his chosen city and from the Jews to Orthodox Christians as his chosen people. So this mythical version of the foundation of Constantinople helps to underline Constantine's role in God's revised plan.

Here Kedrenos' immediate source was Pseudo-Symeon,⁶⁰ which is also the earliest known reference to Euphratas. We do not know Pseudo-Symeon's source but a plausible case can be made for Constantine of Rhodes, a poet who wrote *inter alia* a partly surviving *ekphrasis* on the Church of the Holy Apostles and whose *Seven Wonders of Constantinople* is accepted as being used by Kedrenos elsewhere for his description of works of art and architecture (an unusual feature of his chronicle), whether directly or indirectly.⁶¹ So it is not unreasonable to suppose that among Constantine's several works that have not survived there was more on Constantinople that Kedrenos may also

58 Reading τόπος for τρόπος.

59 Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 495–496).

60 Pseudo-Symeon, *Paris gr.* 1712, fol. 86r, 13–36 verbatim.

61 E. g. James 2012, 6, 136; Downey 1955, 212–221.

have used. Certainly the account here is worthy of a poet's imagination, while Constantine's date (c. 875–950) would explain why such an account only appears in a chronicle now for the first time.⁶²

Kedrenos next returns for years 19 and 20 in his chronological account. If Constantine of Rhodes is his source for the foundation myth, it would make sense that he is also the source for Kedrenos' next item, a further element of the Constantine myth, which causes problems.

Τῷ κ' ἔτει τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου πληρωθείσης τῆς πόλεως ἐθεματίσθη ὑπὸ Οὐάλεντος ἀστρονόμου, ἐν τῇ η' ἡμέρᾳ τῶν ἐγκαινίων αὐτῆς, ἐκ προστάξεως τοῦ βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου, μηνὶ Μαίῳ ια', ἡμέρᾳ β', ἰνδίκτω γ', ἔτει ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου ,εωλη'. περιέχει δὲ τὸ ὅλον συμπέρασμα ἔτη χρς'.

In year 20 of the reign of Constantine, with the city completed, on the order of the emperor Constantine, its birthday was fixed by the astronomer Valens on day 8 of its consecration, on Monday 11th of May in indic-tion 3 in the year of the world 5838. The entire conclusion embraces 696 years.⁶³

The final sentence remains obscure but presumably means that Constantinople would survive for another 696 years. Vettius Valens produced his nine-book anthology of horoscopes in the mid 2nd century, so we are certainly here dealing with a myth. But there is the added problem of the dates. *Anno mundi* 5838 is 330 CE and thus correct for the official dedication of Constantinople (as distinct from its 'foundation' in 324), but a further 696 years ought to have had Constantinople ending in 1026, well before Kedrenos was writing (though close to the time that Pseudo-Symeon wrote),⁶⁴ so it is odd that he has bothered to include this evidently false prediction without comment. Zonaras,⁶⁵ aware of the difficulty, tried to find an explanation, but the problem evidently did not trouble Kedrenos. If Constantine of Rhodes is the source, then perhaps some

62 Symeon Logothete, 88.12 (Wahlgren 2008, 110) very briefly, and in more detail Zonaras, 13.3 and Scutariotes, 46.21–49 have similar accounts. Zonaras mentions Serdica and Sigaeum rather than Thessaloniki as Constantine's initial choice. Scutariotes, probably derived from Zonaras, says Constantine investigated many (unnamed) places.

63 Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 497).

64 Pseudo-Symeon's chronicle ends at 963 and was probably completed around the end of the 10th century (Kazhdan et al. 1991, 1983 s.v. Symeon Magistros, Pseudo).

65 Zonaras, 13.3 suggests as a last resort that the horoscope may be referring to the ending of good government (on the qualities of which he expands) and the change to a form of tyranny, probably a safely obscure criticism of the Komnenoi.

allowance needs to be made for poetic licence, though against Constantine of Rhodes is the fact that Pseudo-Symeon, clearly Kedrenos' source for the foundation myth, makes no mention of Valens or his horoscope, nor yet does Symeon Logothete.⁶⁶ David Pingree has made a strong case for the astrologer Demophilos making the horoscope around 990 on Valens' principles which was then wrongly attributed to Valens in Kedrenos' and Zonaras' common source (unless Zonaras is copying from Kedrenos),⁶⁷ but whatever the explanation, it is Kedrenos who was first to add the horoscope to the Constantine myth in Byzantine chronicles.

Year 20 continues with the death of Crispus (but with no suggestion of his being executed by Constantine) and, surprisingly briefly, Helen's discovery of the True Cross in Jerusalem. For much of the rest of year 20 Kedrenos follows GM with a rather confused narrative.⁶⁸ Though that narrative certainly is in need of explication, such explication lies well outside the scope of this article, as it would not add to our understanding of the legendary Constantine. Kedrenos ends year 20, however, by introducing the heresy of Messalianism with material (and a lively story) that he has transferred to Constantine from GM's narrative of Constantius,⁶⁹ to which he also adds a sentence to point out that the heresy still flourished in his own times under other appellations including that of the Bogomils. Why he has transferred this episode to Constantine and introduced a reference to Bogomils remains unclear, although it is presumably a reference to contemporary problems, but his reasoning may have been that such material simply did not suit his rather carefully contrived picture of Constantius,⁷⁰ and he may have simply needed the Messalians to provide the subject of his opening sentence in year 21: "They set the Persian emperor Sapor against the Christians, and a persecution occurred in which eighteen thousand were killed

66 It is, however, entirely possible that Kedrenos discovered Constantine of Rhodes by seeking out Pseudo-Symeon's source.

67 Pingree 1977, 305–315; cf. Banchich and Lane 2009, 201–202, to which I am indebted for the reference to Pingree.

68 The topics include: Constantine's supposed building of churches and destruction of temples; the uneducated patriarch Alexander silencing a pagan philosopher; Helen's return from Jerusalem and death; the first ecumenical synod at Nicaea; Arius' theology; the supposed miracle linked to the synod (i.e. an expansion of the Alexander story); the lengthy account on the need for avoiding hasty judgement, copied from GM but seemingly extended by mistake to include GM's concluding account of the theology associated with the first ecumenical synod with the intervening topics and context omitted. (I suspect a lacuna of an entire folio).

69 GM (de Boor & Wirth 1978, 537.12–539.9). It concludes GM's account of Constantius.

70 See Burke, Scott and Tuffin forthcoming.

by him.” Apart from the Messalians there do not seem to be any candidates for who the “they” are. The continuation, however, is either a final piece in the legendary Constantine or else a rare piece of genuine new information.

ἡ δὲ αἰτία τῆς διαλύσεως τῆς μεταξὺ Ῥωμαίων καὶ Περσῶν γενομένης εἰρήνης γέγονε δι' αἰτίαν τοιαύτην. Μητροδόωρος τις Περσογενὴς προσποιησάμενος φιλοσοφεῖν ἀπῆλθεν ἐν Ἰνδία καὶ τοὺς Βραχμᾶνας, καὶ χρησάμενος ἐγκρατεῖα πολλῇ γέγονεν αὐτοῖς σεβαστός. εἰργάζετο δὲ ὑδρομύλους καὶ λοετρά, μέχρι τότε μὴ γνωριζόμενα παρ' αὐτοῖς. οὗτος ἐν τοῖς ἀδύτοις ὡς εὐσεβῆς εἰσιὼν λίθους τιμίους καὶ μαργαρίτας πολλοὺς ὑφείλετο. ἔλαβε δὲ καὶ παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Ἰνδῶν, ὥστε τῷ βασιλεῖ δῶρα κομίσαι. καὶ ἐπανελθὼν εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον δέδωκε ταῦτα ὡς ἴδια τῷ βασιλεῖ. θαυμάζοντι δὲ αὐτῷ ἔφη καὶ ἄλλα διὰ γῆς προπέμψαι, ἀλλ' ἀφαιρεθῆναι ὑπὸ Περσῶν. γράφει οὖν ἀποτόμως Κωνσταντῖνος πρὸς Σαπώρην, ἀποσταλῆναι αὐτά, καὶ δεξάμενος οὐκ ἀνταπέστειλε. διὰ τοῦτο ἐλύθη ἡ εἰρήνη.

The cause of the dissolution of the peace made between Persians and Romans happened for the following reason. A Persian called Metrodoros made a pretence of being a philosopher and departed to the Brahmins in India, and by showing great abstinence he became revered among them. He also constructed water-mills and baths which up till then were not known to them. This fellow on entering their shrines as a pious person stole lots of pearls and precious stones. He also got them from the emperor of the Indians as gifts to take to the emperor. On returning to Byzantium he gave them to the emperor as his own. With the emperor looking in amazement, [Metrodoros] said to him that he had sent ahead further [gifts] by land but that they had been seized by the Persians. Constantine wrote brusquely to Sapor for them to be returned, and after receiving them did not send anything in return. Because of this the peace was ended.⁷¹

The story has been described as “more appropriate to the Arabian Nights than to sober history”⁷² but it just so happens that in the 4th century Ammianus Marcellinus was clearly aware of this story and accepted it as true: “It was Constantine, not Julian, who kindled the Parthian conflagration because his

⁷¹ Kedrenos (Bekker 1838, 516–7).

⁷² Warmington 1981, 464. Warmington continues, however, by noting further references to Metrodorus and suggesting a plausible context for the story among criticisms of Constantine. He suggests Eunapius as the most likely original source.

greed led him to accept the lies of Metrodorus, of which I gave a full account earlier.”⁷³ Sadly that account must have been somewhere in Ammianus’ first thirteen books which do not survive. But it has provoked division among scholars on the likely truth or otherwise of the story in relation to both Constantine’s and Julian’s Parthian campaigns,⁷⁴ and of how it may have reached Kedrenos, and later Zonaras, who are unlikely to have read it in the history of a fourth-century pagan writing in Latin. Eunapius is sometimes suggested, but to my mind a lost Christian historian, such as Gelasius of Caesarea, a participant in the Second Ecumenical Council of 381, or a Greek version of Rufinus,⁷⁵ is more likely since some such Greek source was certainly read by GM on other matters and is likely enough to have been read by Kedrenos, though (to the best of my knowledge) this has not been previously suggested in the literature.

Conclusion

Kedrenos’ Constantine is obviously very different from that of Malalas with which we began, but it is still based in outline on the same elements: notably his early baptism by Sylvester in Rome; his Christian rule and his foundation of Constantinople as his new capital. Of these just the baptism is mythical. The changes that follow arise at first from the chroniclers’ changing requirements and later from the availability of new material. So first Theophanes in the early 9th century needed to transform Malalas’ Constantine from being simply the first Christian emperor, responsible for the triumph of Christianity, into an emperor whose orthodoxy was paramount, but he had to do so without any new information. He was, however, able (or obliged) to exploit contemporary conflict over iconoclasm to find the strength to marshal new arguments to strengthen his account of Constantine. In the late 9th century GM did find that new information in the form of *Vita Silvestri*, which then allowed him to

73 Ammianus Marcellinus, 25.4.23 (trans. Hamilton 1986, 299; Seyfarth 1978, 1: 364: “... non Iulianum sed Constantinum ardore Parthicos succendisse, cum Metrodori mendacis auidius adquiescit, ut dudum rettulimus plene.”).

74 E. g. Warmington 1981, 464–468; Matthews 1989, 134–135, 448.

75 Rufinus, *HE* 1.9 (PL 21, 478B) does refer to Metrodorus as a philosopher who visited India. He is also mentioned by Jerome, *Chronicon* AD 330 (Helm 1956, 232) and Socrates, 1.19.3, as Warmington 1981, 464–465, points out. (Warmington also lists Sozomen, 2.24 which, though clearly derived from the same source as Socrates, does not actually mention Metrodorus; cf. *PLRE* 1, 601 sv. Metrodorus 1 for the same error).

introduce new material, especially to exploit the account of Constantine's baptism, but also to make more use of Sylvester and his spectacular miracles in curing leprosy, slaying the dragon and resurrecting the bull while simultaneously demonstrating (to a Christian audience) Christianity's superiority in the debate with the Jews. GM did, however, find it necessary to correct *Vita Silvestri* (in his view) and have Helen, untainted by Judaism, baptized at the same time as Constantine. Kedrenos was then able to build on GM's history of religion by incorporating it in a universal history, based on the chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon, but also exploiting the actual text of *Vita Silvestri*. He not only used it to a greater extent than GM but also accepted that it may well have been right about the late baptism of Helen while, like GM, carefully ignoring any suggestion of her support for or links with Judaism. So he both differed from *Vita Silvestri* on Helen's Judaism and corrected GM on her baptism, but does both these things without expressly saying so.

Furthermore Kedrenos was able to make rather more of the foundation of Constantinople, making it fit an interpretation of history that runs through his chronicle whereby God transferred divine support from Jerusalem and the disobedient Jews to his revised plan with Constantinople as the chosen city for his chosen people, the orthodox Christians. For each of the chroniclers their account is still built around a narrative of the life of Constantine, the first Christian emperor. A reader would doubtless find the Constantine of Kedrenos decidedly different from the Constantine of Malalas, but Malalas himself would probably still have recognised Kedrenos' Constantine easily enough and seen it as simply expanding his version to suit and fit the extra space available in a different work. So while there were changes in detail, he was still the same Constantine, the first Christian emperor, baptized early in his reign by the orthodox Sylvester in Rome, and the founder of the God-guarded city of Constantinople.

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Breaking Down Barriers: Eunuchs in Italy and North Africa, 400–620

Michael Edward Stewart

In the second decade of the 7th century, Byzantine rule in Italy was in peril. The imperial government in Constantinople found itself in the midst of a final fight for survival with its long-time nemesis from the East, the Persian empire. Taking advantage of this distraction, in 615, parts of northern and southern Italy rebelled against their Byzantine overlords. In Ravenna, a group of Lombards and native Italians murdered the Byzantine exarch and a number of imperial officials in Ravenna, while in Naples, a local strongman, John of Compsa, established himself as the city's independent ruler. Though embroiled in the fight with Persia, in the spring of 616, the emperor Heraclius (r. 610–641) sent the eunuch chamberlain Eleutherius to exact revenge and restore order.

In this task, the eunuch was largely successful.¹ According to a near contemporary Italian source, “the patricius and cubicularius Eleutherius came to Ravenna and killed all those who had been implicated in the death of exarch John and the judges of the State.” The exarch then turned his army south. After cordially consulting with Pope Deusdedit in Rome, Eleutherius entered Naples, and “fought his way against the usurper and killed the upstart and many others with him”.² His further attack against the Lombards, however, failed, forcing the exarch to pay a yearly tribute of 500 pounds of gold to the Lombards. Though the precise details remain murky, Eleutherius' successes seemed to have gone to his head, and in 619, he rebelled against Heraclius, and named himself western emperor. A later chronicle from northern Italy declared, “And then, when he returned with victory, he scorned the patriciate with the fasces;

1 The extant sources for Eleutherius' career are all western: *Auctarii Havniensis Extrema* (ch. 25), published around 625, provides the most detailed account of Eleutherius. Cf. *LP* (c. 640); Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* (c. 790); Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, ch. 106 (c. 830s–840s).

2 *LP*, *Deusdedit* ch. 2: Eodem tempore veniens Eleutherius patricius et cubicularius Ravenna et occidit omnes qui in nece Joannis exarchi et iudicibus reipublicae fuerant mixti. Hic venit Roma susceptus est a sanctissimo Deusdedit papa optime; qui egressus de Roma venit Neapolim qui tenebatur a Joanne Compsino [Campanino] intarta. Qui pugnando Eleutherius patricius ingressus est Neapolim et interfecit tyrannum. (*LP* 1:319).

although he was a eunuch he took up the ruling of the empire.”³ A certain John—perhaps the archbishop of Ravenna—advised Eleutherius to depart Ravenna and hasten to Rome, since “this was where the throne of empire resided [ubi imperii solium maneret]”.⁴ His reign, if we can call it that, did not last long; on the way to Rome, the imperial troops killed Eleutherius in the camp of the Luceoli, and “his head, placed in a bag, was brought to the emperor in Constantinople.”⁵

That an exarch might take advantage of turmoil in Constantinople to seek imperial office should cause little wonder. Granted civilian and military powers, exarchs were prone to rebellion in the 7th century.⁶ Heraclius’ rise to the purple came in the aftermath of a rebellion by his father (also named Heraclius)—the long-serving exarch of North Africa—against the emperor Phocas (r. 602–610) in 608.⁷ Some might consider a eunuch naming himself as a Roman emperor more surprising, since most modern literature suggests that castration or indeed most types of mutilation generally barred one from imperial office.⁸ Even allowing for embellishment, then, it is significant that our early medieval western sources find it possible that a eunuch could aspire to such heights.

Eleutherius, indeed, was not the only eunuch-exarch to seek imperial power. In 649, another Byzantine cubicularius, and likely eunuch, Olympius, headed to Italy to settle a dispute.⁹ He too would eventually rebel and be proclaimed emperor, this time with the help of the pope he had been sent to arrest. Such examples vividly expose the reality that eunuchs cut across any neat rubrics we might wish to impose on them. These usurpations would also seem to affirm the scholarly consensus that a lessening of hostility towards eunuchs had

3 *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis* (trans. Deliyannis 2004, 224).

4 *Auctarii Havniensis Extrema* 25, MGH AA 9, 339, quoted in Deliyannis 2010, 391, n. 11.

5 *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis, Iohannes IV* (trans. Deliyannis 2004, 225). The full text reads: Post haec autem invasa est Neapolis a Iohanne, et non post dies aliquos Eleutherius postquam expulit, interfecit eum. Et dum cum uictoria reuerteretur, patriciatus dedignatus est fascibus, quamvis eunuchus fuisset, imperii iura suscepit. Qui egressus de Rauenna Romam velet ire, a militibus in castro Luceolis gladio peremptus est; cuius caput, conditum sacco, Constantinopolim imperatori delatum est. (Deliyannis 2006, 277.80–85). Cf. Paul the Deacon, *Origo gentis Langobardorum* 4.34.

6 Moorhead 2014, 158.

7 On Heraclius’ rebellion, see Kaegi 2003, 36. For the revolt of the African exarch Gregory in 647, see Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6138.

8 E. g., Longworth 1997, 321; Cameron 2004, 169; Harris 2006, 16; Herrin 2013, 268.

9 Olympius’ status as a eunuch is not certain. Shaun Tougher posits (Tougher 2008, 161) that since he was previously a cubicularius, it is probable that he was a eunuch.

taken hold from the 5th century.¹⁰ Yet, although modern histories of the period regularly note Eleutherius' and Olympius' usurpations, they largely gloss over the significance of eunuchs seeking imperial office.¹¹

This chapter seeks to fill this gap. It reflects on how social and political developments from the 5th century, within and outside of Byzantium, had made these ambitious seventh-century eunuch-exarchs possible. Certainly, as symbols of imperial power and Byzantine otherness, eunuchs offer a stimulating instrument to examine this volume's main theme, how Byzantine culture was translated, transported, and transmitted to North Africa, Italy, and post-Roman Europe. After a brief introduction to the role of eunuchs in the Byzantine army and imperial court of the 5th century, I move on to a detailed study of two successful eunuch-generals, Solomon and Narses, and their portrayals in contemporary historiographical sources.

Eunuchs in the fifth-century East and West

To appreciate Eleutherius' and Olympius' achievements, it is first necessary to return to an earlier era. At the dawn of the 5th century, eunuchs represented a common sight on the streets of Rome and Constantinople.¹² Although their primary function throughout the Byzantine era remained service within the imperial palace, eunuchs served as diplomats, assassins, and political leaders, led armies and played essential roles within the church.

However, as many scholars have commented, the seeming gender ambiguity of eunuchs could be troubling for Late Roman writers.¹³ We find this sentiment expressed in a late fourth-century source, which described eunuchs as "exiles from the society of the human race, belonging to neither one sex nor the other".¹⁴ The very ease with which a man could literally be severed from the 'source' of his sexual identity troubled many Romans. At the opening of the

¹⁰ Ringrose 2003; Tougher 2004, 70–82.

¹¹ E. g., Deliyannis 2010; Moorhead 2014; Haldon 2016. Nineteenth-century scholars were more inclined to discuss the implications of a eunuch-emperor. See, e. g., Hodgkin 1892, 156, bemoaning, "That such a man [Eleutherius] should aspire to be Emperor of the Romans seemed to bring back the shameful days of Eutropius and Arcadius".

¹² For eunuchs as a defining feature of Roman culture in the East and the West, see Tougher 2015, 161.

¹³ See, e. g., Hopkins 1978; Kuefler 2001; Ringrose 2003; Tougher 2004.

¹⁴ Claudius Mamertinus, *Gratiarum actio suo Juliano imperatori* 19.4 (trans. Lieu 1989): sed spadones quoque, quos quasi a consortio humani generis extorres ab utroque sexu aut naturae origo aut clades corporis separavit.

5th century, the poet Claudian quipped that the knife makes ‘males womanish’ [mollire mares].¹⁵

A gendered and negative view of eunuchs appears particularly prevalent at the close of the fourth century, a time when relations between the western and eastern halves of the empire dramatically broke down. Claudian, a native Greek-speaker from Alexandria based in Italy, crafted a frequently cited polemic on the Emperor Arcadius’ (r. 395–408) grand chamberlain (praepositus sacri cubiculi) Eutropius.¹⁶ The poet’s *In Eutropium* (Against Eutropius) lambasted the eastern Romans for allowing an ‘unmanly’ eunuch to take on the hyper-masculine duties of a military commander and consul. When describing the shame of having a eunuch leading Roman armies, the poet lamented, “Sister, shall we ever have the power to cure the East of effeminacy? Will this corrupt age never stiffen up?”¹⁷ To those in Constantinople who had permitted a eunuch to fight, he scolded, “Leave arms to men”.¹⁸

As a propagandist for Stilicho and the western regime, Claudian spared no vitriol when denigrating a rival from a then-hostile eastern court.¹⁹ However, several East Roman sources criticised Eutropius with similarly harsh rhetoric.²⁰ East Roman writers also criticised western Romans for their over-dependence on eunuchs.²¹ So too did Claudian’s contemporary, and fellow eastern émigré to Rome, Ammianus Marcellinus, who decried the large number of eunuchs in the city of Rome.²² The former soldier Ammianus lamented that whereas their Roman ancestors had acted ‘as skilful directors of battles’, many of the nobility of his day instead spent their time arranging banquets and assembling bands of eunuchs, whom the historian disparaged as ‘troops of mutilated men’ [mutilorum hominum agmina]. Having ‘abandoned’ their time-honoured political

15 Claudian, *In Eutropium* 1.48 (trans. Platnauer 1922, 143).

16 See, e. g., Long 1996; Kuefler 2001, 36, 65–67, 97–100; Tougher 2015. For the political roles and social significance of Eutropius and other praepositus sacri cubiculi in the 4th and 5th centuries, see Schlinkert 1994 and 1997.

17 Claudian, *In Eutropium* 2. 112–114 (trans. Kuefler 2001, 68): Nedum mollitia, nedum, germana, mederi possumus Eoae? numquam corrupta rigescent saecula?

18 Claudian, *In Eutropium* 1.281 (trans. Platnauer 1922, 159): [...] arma relinque viris.

19 For this rivalry, see Cameron 1970, 37–62.

20 See, e. g. Eunapius, *frags.* 64, 65, 1–7; Zosimus, *New History* 5.38–18; Marcellinus, *Chron. s.a.* 396.

21 Ammianus, *Res gestae* 31.11.1; Eunapius, *frag.* 47; Zosimus, *New History* 4.22.

22 For the close association of the term mollitia ‘softness’ with ‘effeminacy’, see Williams 2013, 240–263.

and military offices, these aristocrats no longer led real soldiers into battle, but merely commanded eunuchs.²³

Hostility towards eunuchs was not universal. Even the renowned persecutor of castrates, Julian (r. 361–63), had admitted that he owed much of his manly deportment and love of Classical literature to his eunuch childhood tutor—who was probably a Goth. Ammianus too furnished several positive portraits of eunuchs.²⁴

Yet, pinpointing the actual individuals beneath the tropes is notoriously difficult. Similar to ancient women and other marginalised groups, much of the hostile rhetoric hurled at eunuchs served as literary devices whereby the ancient authors could attack their main targets. For example, Claudian used Eutropius to condemn the eastern court,²⁵ whereas Ammianus set his sights on certain members of Rome's elite and those eunuchs who had served in the regime of the historian's *bête noire*—Constantius II (r. 337–361).²⁶ Not coincidentally, 'bad' eunuchs appear usually in the reigns of 'bad' emperors or serve wicked men or women.²⁷ Certainly, we find a general level of acceptance of eunuchs in Late Roman society. Nevertheless, no other eunuch after Eutropius would be named consul, and as far as we know, it would not be until the reign of the emperor Justinian (r. 527–565), in the 6th century, that another eunuch would lead a large Roman army.

The use of eunuchs, however, accelerated in the 5th century. Eunuchs played essential roles in the fifth-century politics that reshaped the 'twin regimes' in the East and West.²⁸ We observe eunuchs performing martial duties. Unable to procreate, eunuchs had been utilised originally to perform jobs within the intimate regions of the palace. This facility had over time seen them being pressed into service as imperial bodyguards (*spatharii*). By the 5th century, emperors had grown to depend upon their eunuchs for protection. These men's intimate contact with the emperor could lead to political influence. The dominant court eunuch in 440s Constantinople, Chrysaphius, had first served as Emperor Theodosius II's *spatharius* and *cubicularius*.²⁹ Eunuchs in these prominent positions remained vulnerable to execution during political crises

23 Ammianus, *Res gestae* 14.6.17 (trans. Rolfe, 1: 47). Cf. Tougher 1999, 63.

24 Sidéris 2000, 681–717.

25 Long 1996, 221–262.

26 Tougher 2004, 71.

27 Tougher 2008, 126.

28 Tougher 2008; Scholten 1995.

29 On Chrysaphius, see Scholten 1995, 248–249; Tougher 2008, 40–41, 44, 47, 140.

or regime changes.³⁰ When Theodosius II died of injuries sustained in a horse-riding accident in July of 450, Chrysaphius' execution at the behest of the incoming regime soon followed.³¹

Eunuchs' acute dependence on the emperors they served saw them perform the ultimate act of devotion—the elimination of imperial rivals. Granted permission to carry their weapons within the palace, head chamberlains and eunuch-bodyguards made particularly good assassins.³² Eunuchs partook in two of the 5th century's most infamous political assassinations. The first occurred in 454 when the 36-year-old western emperor Valentinian III (r. 425–455) and his *primicerius sacri cubiculi* Heraclius ambushed the famous generalissimo Flavius Aëtius at a financial meeting in Ravenna. Catching the old general off guard, the emperor struck Aëtius with his sword, while his eunuch attacked simultaneously with a cleaver he had concealed under his robes.³³ The Heraclius described by the fifth-century historian and diplomat Priscus remains a spectral figure, motivated by the typical desire of court eunuchs to further his hold upon a weak Roman emperor by eliminating a rival for imperial attention. Having slain the famous 'conqueror' of Attila, neither Valentinian nor Heraclius had much time to bask in their victory; Aëtius' supporters murdered the pair shortly afterwards. Valentinian's assassination of a war hero, and his reliance on his eunuch advisor to perform the deed, provoked an almost universally hostile response.³⁴

In 470, the eastern emperor Leo I (r. 457–474) employed similar tactics when his armed eunuchs hijacked and killed the long-serving Alan general, Aspar, and his sons, at a meeting of the eastern Senate.³⁵ Unlike his western counterpart, Leo and his eunuchs emerged unscathed, though the emperor earned from his critics the disparaging epithet 'The Butcher' for the killings.³⁶ The eunuchs involved in this assassination remained nameless, mere weapons in the hands of the emperor they served.

We see eunuchs performing their familiar roles in the post-imperial regimes found in fifth- and early sixth-century Vandalic North Africa and Ostrogothic

30 On this expendability, see Hopkins 1978, 176–196.

31 Priscus, *frag.* 3.1; Marcellinus, *Chron.* s. a. 450.3; Cf. Malalas, *Chron.* 14.32. On Chrysaphius' execution, see Croke 1995, 90.

32 McEvoy 2013, 188–189.

33 Priscus, *frag.* 30.1.

34 Sidonius, *Carmina* 7.359; Marcellinus Comes, *Chron.* s.a. 455.

35 Marcellinus, *Chron.* s.a. 471.

36 Malchus, *frag.* 1.3.

Italy.³⁷ Once again, we observe a combination of positive and negative attitudes towards castrates. Mocking court-eunuchs in a Classical and gendered literary style appears to have been a favourite pastime of the poets who flourished in the Vandal court. In his poem *About a Royal Eunuch who put on a Turban*, the North African Luxorius memorably spoofed a Vandalic court eunuch:

A youthful eunuch of the royal household,
resplendent in his reddish hair and flame-coloured locks,
placed a turban on his head.
Mindful of his own modesty,
knowing well what he was,
he put it on, with nobody forcing him,
what had not been appropriate to him.³⁸

A surviving sarcophagus from the Museo Arcivescovile in Ravenna of Theoderic's eunuch chamberlain, Seda, offers another reminder that eunuchs also garnered respect. The inscription reads, "Here rests in peace the *vir sublimis* and eunuch, Seda, cubicularius of the king Theoderic, who lived around 40 years. Buried here before the ides of March during the consulship of the *vir clarissimus* Basilius (541) in the 4th indiction (of Justinian)."³⁹

By this period, contingents of eunuchs signified imperial Roman authority.⁴⁰ Hence, Theoderic and the Vandal kings' employment of eunuchs may have served as one way to proclaim their imperial *Romanitas*.⁴¹ The eunuchs' presence in Ostrogothic Italy may provide an explanation for why in the wide array of gendered invective hurled at the eastern Romans by their Gothic foes during Justinian's reconquest of Italy, none of it, as far as we know, mentions the

37 For eunuchs in Vandalic North Africa, see Merrills & Miles 2010, 108; For Ostrogothic Italy, see Moorhead 1994, 75.

38 Luxorius, *Poem* 12 (trans. Rosenblum): Rutilo decens capillo / Roseoque crine ephebus / Spado regius mitellam / Capiti suo locavit. / Proprii memor pudoris, / Bene conscius quid esset, / Posuit, cogente nullo, / Fuerat minus quod illi.

39 CIL 11, 64 no. 310 (my trans.): HIC REQUIESCIT IN PACE VIR S(u)BL(imis) SEDA IGNVCVS ET CVBICVLARIVS REGIS THEODERICI QVI VIXITANN(os) PL(us) M(inus) XL DEPOSITVS EST SVB D(ie) IIII ID(us)MARTIAS, BASILIO IVN(iore) V(iro) C(larissimo) CONS(ule) INDICTIONE QVARTA.

40 Tougher 2008, 116.

41 Schoolman 2013, 65, n. 66.

emperor's reliance on eunuch commanders.⁴² It is to the first of Justinian's eunuch-generals, Solomon that we now turn.

Solomon

The magister militum and two-time praetorian prefect Africae (534–536, 539–544) Solomon (c. 480/490–544) was the first of three eunuchs to command Byzantine armies during Justinian's reign. Another castrate, Scholasticus, served as commander of an army sent against the Sklavenoi in 551. While the most famous eunuch-commander of all, Narses (c. 480–573), had achieved major victories over the Goths in 552 at the Battle of Taginae (Busto Gallorum) and Mons Lactarius and versus the Franks and Alamanni in 554 at the battle of Casilunus that helped to secure the Emperor Justinian I's retaking of Italy from the Goths after an arduous nineteen-year struggle.

We first hear of Solomon serving under Belisarius. The monophysite *Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah* records:

Accompanying him (Belisarius) was Solomon, a eunuch, from the fortress of Idriphthon. He was an astute man, capable in the affairs of the world, having been a *notarius* to the dux Felicissimus and having been attached to the rest of the governors, and he had become cunning through training by [tackling] problems.⁴³

Felicissimus had been *dux* of Mesopotamia in 505/506, so Solomon's career in the intervening two decades remains a mystery; though it is likely that by 527 Solomon was already an experienced soldier. Belisarius probably chose Solomon for his previous experience as a secretary and soldier who knew the politics and main players around the dangerous eastern border with Persia.⁴⁴

Little has come down to us about Solomon's service in the Persian campaigns, but he had earned Belisarius' esteem, and the Vandal war in 533 found him serving as Belisarius' *domesticus* (the *protectores domestici* were an elite guard unit of the early Byzantine army, who functioned as both bodyguards

42 Accounts of this gendered propaganda are found in Kaegi 1990, 79–81; Arnold 2014, 48–51, 141–158; Stewart 2014.

43 Pseudo-Zachariah, *Chron.* 9.2a.18 (trans. Phenix & Horn).

44 Moving up from the position of *notarius* (secretary, scribe) occurred rather frequently in the early Byzantine empire. Indeed, two sixth-century emperors, Tiberius II (r. 574–582) and Maurice (r. 582–602) had begun their careers as *notarius*.

and staff officers). The sixth-century historian of Justinian's military campaigns in the East and the West, Procopius, memorably introduced Solomon as one of two commanders of Belisarius' *foederati*: "This Solomon was a eunuch, but it was not by the intent of any man that his genitals had been severed: some accident imposed this lot upon him when he was a child."⁴⁵ Though differentiating him from other eunuchs in this passage, Procopius placed accidental eunuchs in the same category of "those individuals who either had undescended testes, or were born without them."⁴⁶

Solomon's eunuchism did not inhibit his rapid advancement within the East Roman army. When Belisarius headed to Sicily to organise his impending invasion of southern Italy, he named Solomon as the supreme commander (praetorian prefect) of North Africa, a role that combined military and political leadership.⁴⁷ The command of this newly reconquered region points to the faith that both Belisarius and the emperor Justinian placed in Solomon's capabilities.⁴⁸ Solomon indeed represents the rare individual in *Wars* whom Belisarius, his *assessor* Procopius, and Justinian all trusted and admired.⁴⁹ That Procopius knew Solomon and seemingly had a close relationship with him helps to explain why in *Wars*, Solomon is described so positively. Certainly, Procopius depicted Solomon's trials and tribulations during his two tenures in North Africa in a highly sympathetic light. Solomon is loyal, intelligent, restrained, innovative, and courageous. Anthony Kaldellis indeed describes Solomon "as the most highly praised person in Vandal War."⁵⁰

Romans and non-Romans in North Africa seem to have cared little about Solomon's status as a eunuch. After his introduction, Procopius only rarely mentioned Solomon's eunuchism.⁵¹ Instead, Procopius cast him as an idealised battle-hardened leader, a man's man. Unquestionably, Solomon's selfless courage and adroit generalship are on display throughout the narrative.⁵² At

45 Procopius, *Wars* (trans. Kaldellis): 'ὁ δὲ Σολόμων οὗτος εὐνούχος μὲν ἦν, οὐκ ἐξ ἐπιβουλῆς δὲ ἀνθρώπου τὰ αἰδοῖα ἐτύγχανεν ἀποτμηθεῖς, ἀλλὰ τις αὐτῷ τύχη ἐν σπαργάνοις ὄντι τοῦτο ἐβράβευσε.

46 Tougher 2008, 31.

47 Procopius, *Wars* 4.8.23.

48 Conant 2012, 204–205; Conant posits reasonably that Justinian and Solomon were close.

49 E. g., Procopius, *Wars* 3.29.19, 4.8, 4.22.11.

50 Kaldellis 2004, 189.

51 Procopius, *Wars* 4.12.28, where Procopius describes a Berber prophecy that "their nation would be destroyed by a beardless man" [ὡς ἄρα τὸ γένος αὐτοῖς πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἀγνείου ὀλεῖται].

52 Whately 2016, 138.

the battle of Mammes in 534, Solomon's quick thinking and courageous generalship averted disaster and obtained a notable victory over the Berbers.⁵³

Procopius largely explained away Solomon's setbacks. For instance, Solomon's failure during his first command in North Africa, according to Procopius, resulted primarily from his fierce loyalty to Justinian and his policies. Following an imperial edict, Solomon refused to permit the Roman soldiers who had taken Vandal wives to inherit these women's land. Moreover, adhering to Justinian's religious policies for the newly conquered province, he would not allow the 1,000 Arians in his army to practise their religion. Whipped up by the Vandal clergy and the soldiers' Vandal wives, Solomon narrowly escaped a plot by a group of these men to assassinate him on Easter Sunday (23 March) 536, fleeing along with Procopius to Sicily, where the pair then sought Belisarius' assistance to put down the revolt.⁵⁴ For the next three years, North Africa suffered internal rebellion and external challenges to Byzantine rule.

After his return to Africa in 539, Procopius presented Solomon as a leader who had learned from his previous mistakes: "Solomon sailed to Carthage and, having rid himself of Stotzas [the rebel Byzantine general] he ruled with moderation and setting the army in order ... Libya became powerful under his rule."⁵⁵ In a series of swift campaigns, Solomon stamped out the rebellion's remnants and drove the Berbers from Numidia. As many idealised generals before him, Solomon treated with respect his defeated enemies, both Roman and non-Roman. Procopius described the aftermath of Solomon's sage policies thus: "As a result of this all the Libyans who were subjects of the Romans, coming to enjoy secure peace and finding the rule of Solomon wise and very moderate, no longer had any thought of war in their minds, and seemed the most fortunate of all men."⁵⁶

As occurs regularly in *Wars*, through a combination of bad fortune and men's propensity to moral depravity, the good times did not last. Justinian, probably out of goodwill towards Solomon, in 544 assigned the eunuch's nephews Sergius and Cyrus to key commands in North Africa. Such nepotism was common in the early Byzantine army,⁵⁷ but Procopius, perhaps seeking to shift

53 Procopius, *Wars* 4.11.47–56.

54 Procopius, *Wars* 4.14.30–37. In *Secret History* (18.9–13), Procopius harshly criticised Justinian's policies against Arians and native landowners. In *Wars*, however, he was clearly hostile to the rebels.

55 Procopius, *Wars* 4.21.28.

56 Procopius, *Wars* 4.20.33. Cf. Marcellinus, *Chron.* s.a. 540.

57 Conant 2012, 227–229.

blame away from his hero Solomon, lamented, “And this man (Sergius) became the chief cause of great ruin to the people of Libya.” According to Procopius, the *dux Tripolitaniae* Sergius’ unjust murder of eighty Berber envoys led to a dangerous uprising, resulting in Solomon’s downfall.

Defections by Solomon’s Berber allies swung the balance of power back into the rebel’s favour. Solomon’s death, as described by Procopius, is heroic and tragic in the best Roman literary fashion.⁵⁸ Abandoned by the majority of his Roman and non-Roman soldiers, and overwhelmed by the Berber’s superior numbers, Solomon and his loyal bodyguards at the battle of Cillium in Byzacena made a hasty retreat. On the cusp of escaping danger, Solomon’s horse stumbled in a ravine, throwing its rider to the ground. Injured and unable to remount, Solomon died making a heroic last stand, a fitting end for a man Procopius revered throughout *Wars* as an ideal Roman soldier.⁵⁹

What should attract our interest, however, is the vocabulary that Procopius employs in *Secret History* and *Wars* to describe Sergius in the aftermath of his uncle’s death. Out of loyalty to Solomon, Justinian named Sergius as Solomon’s successor.⁶⁰ Procopius attributed Sergius’ subsequent failures in North Africa to his unmanly [*ἄνανδρος*], soft [*μαλθακός*], and effeminate nature [*γνάθους φύσων*],⁶¹ gendered epithets that critics had long deployed to undermine eunuchs in positions of authority.⁶² Moreover, whether consciously or not, Procopius inverted the old topos of the unmanly eunuch undermining the achievements of a manly Roman. While the eunuch Solomon died nobly in battle, the non-eunuch Sergius’ constant meddling, deceit and unmanliness in his two short years as *magister militum Africae* nearly destroyed everything his uncle had achieved.⁶³ Therefore, the more pessimistic vision of Vandalic North Africa found at the close of book 4 of *Wars* may not reflect Procopius’ general disillusionment with Justinian’s North African reconquest as a whole, but is perhaps more a symptom of the historian’s anguish over the loss of an individual, Solomon, whom he respected equally as a leader and a man.⁶⁴

58 For these idealised deaths in battle in Greco-Roman literature, see Eckstein 1995, 42–43.

59 Procopius, *Wars* 4.21–22.1; Cf. Victor Tonnensis, *Chron.* s.a. 543 (11, 201); Marcellinus, *Chron.* s.a. 541.3; Corippus, *Iohannis* 3.417–41.

60 Procopius, *Wars* 4.22.1.

61 Procopius, *Secret History* 4.32–33, *Wars* 4.22.2: οἱ δὲ στρατιῶται, ὅτι δὲ ἄνανδρός τε καὶ μαλθακός παντάπασιν ἦν.

62 Kuefler 2001, 35–36; Tougher 2008, 97–98.

63 On the dangerous meddling in political affairs by Eutropius and Chrysaphius, see Eunapius, *frag.* 65.5; Priscus, *frag.* 4.15.

64 Kaldellis 2016, 15.

Narses

If Solomon established the precedent for a eunuch successfully holding military and civilian commands for the native North Africans and East Romans like Procopius and Justinian, then Narses accentuated the point to those in the East and the West. Narses was a eunuch of Persian-Armenian descent, who had first served Justinian and Theodora as a cubicularius, ultimately attaining the top post available to a court eunuch, *praepositus sacri cubiculi*. He was also a treasurer (a favourite position for Byzantine eunuchs) and later served as *spatharius* (bodyguard). He had even served as an assassin for the empress Theodora.⁶⁵

Justinian's reasons for assigning Narses to a military command appear to have been multiple. As was the case with the appointments of most leading generals, loyalty to the imperial regime represented a primary consideration for selection.⁶⁶ Narses had performed coolly during an uprising known as the *Nika* revolt in 532, which saw the near overthrow of Justinian. According to a contemporary Byzantine source, he had bribed rioters to support the emperor.⁶⁷ His close relationship with the empress Theodora, based, in part, on their shared Christological views, offered further opportunity for advancement.⁶⁸ In 535, Theodora sent Narses with a Byzantine army to reinstate the 'monophysite' Theodosius as patriarch of Alexandria.⁶⁹ Service in North Africa, as for other Roman generals, led to a further appointment in Italy.⁷⁰

Justinian's fears of usurpation probably played a part in Narses' assignment to a military command in Italy. Agathias made it clear that Justinian felt threatened by Belisarius' growing popularity.⁷¹ Procopius explained in *Secret History* that, after defeating the Vandals, Justinian suspected that Belisarius had meant to rule Africa independently. He therefore sent Solomon back to Libya in 534 to test Belisarius' loyalty.⁷² Narses arrival in Italy in 538 with an army to oversee the progress of Belisarius' campaign may have served a similar purpose. Belisarius may have suspected this intent. Indeed, according to Procopius,

65 Procopius, *Wars* 1. 25. 24–30.

66 Conant 2012, 227–228.

67 Malalas, *Chron.* 476.

68 Kruse 2008, 24–27.

69 Liberatus, *Breviarium* 20: Et post mensus duos Narses cubicularius missus ab Augusta Theodora.

70 Conant 2012, 237.

71 Procopius, *Wars* 6.30.1–5; Agathias, *Histories* 5.20.5. Historians continue to debate just how serious a rival Belisarius was for Justinian; see Börm 2013, 63–91.

72 Procopius, *Secret History* 18.9.

dissension between the two generals grew so serious that in 539 Justinian was forced to recall Narses to Constantinople.⁷³

Barring a mission to the Herules in 545, between 539 and 551 Narses remained based in Constantinople, and saw no military action. Narses' naming as the supreme commander of the Italian army in 551 may have arisen more from convenience than part of any grand plan by Justinian. Justinian's top choice, his cousin Germanus, had died in 550 while preparing for a final push into Italy. Justinian's second choice, John, lacked Narses' ability to get along with the other Roman commanders. According to Procopius, Justinian's selection of Narses to take over the Italian campaign surprised contemporaries: "The reason why the emperor had made this decision was explicitly clear to no one in the world."⁷⁴ Procopius commented on a Tuscan prophecy from the reign of the Gothic *rex* Athalaric (r. 526–534) that predicted that one day a eunuch would undo the ruler of Rome.⁷⁵ As Shaun Tougher notes, one can sense enmity towards Narses and eunuchs more generally in these passages.⁷⁶ Certainly, Procopius provided a nuanced portrait of Narses in *Wars*, offering both negative and positive descriptions.⁷⁷

In comparison with Solomon's, Narses' eunuchism plays a much greater role in the histories of Procopius and his continuer Agathias. Neither Procopius nor Agathias took Narses' position as a general for granted. Procopius presented Narses as an anomalous example of a typical eunuch, pronouncing that Narses was more "keen and more energetic than would be expected of a eunuch."⁷⁸ Agathias declared that Narses' mastery of oratory, shrewdness, courage, and heroism were "remarkable in a eunuch and in one who had been brought up in the soft and comfortable atmosphere of the imperial court."⁷⁹ He continued by remarking, "true nobility of soul cannot fail to make its mark, no matter what obstacles are put in its path."⁸⁰ Such words illustrate Agathias' respect for Narses. Yet, that he perceived eunuchism as an impediment to be overcome also points to some lingering prejudicial attitudes towards eunuchs.

73 Procopius, *Wars* 6.22.4–5.

74 Procopius, *Wars* 8.21.7.

75 Procopius, *Wars* 8.21.10–21.

76 Tougher 2013, 163.

77 For Narses' 'negative' qualities see, *Wars* 6.18.11, 6.18.28–29, 6.19.18., 8.23.17–20. For his 'positive' traits, see *Wars* 6.13.16, 8.26.5, 8.26.14, 8.31.22, 8.35.36.

78 Procopius, *Wars* 6.13.16–17: ἄλλως δὲ ὁ ζῶς καὶ μαλλον ἢ κατ' εὐνοῦχον δραστήριος.

79 Agathias, *Histories* 1.16.1: [...] φύσεως δὲ ὅ γε δεξιότητι διέπρεπε καὶ παραστήσαι οἶός τε ἦν λογῶ τὰ βεβουλευμένα καὶ ταῦτα τομίας γε ὧν καὶ ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις τρυφερώτερον ἀνατετραμμένος.

80 Agathias, *Histories* 1.16.2: οὕτως ἄρα ὅτ' ἂν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ φρόνημα ἐλευθερίον τε καὶ γενναῖον ἐνῆ, τοῦτο δὲ οὐδὲν ὁτιοῦν κώλυμα γίγνεται μὴ οὐχὶ εἶναι ἀριστῶ.

Procopius and Agathias, however, indicated that Narses' status as a castrate did little to hinder his military prowess. Agathias, in fact, rejected the old tropes surrounding eunuch-generals like Eutropius. He depicted two warriors in a Frankish army assuming foolishly that they would best the Romans in battle because "a puny little man, a eunuch of the bedchamber, used to a soft and sedentary existence, and with nothing masculine about him" commanded their army.⁸¹ Guided expertly by Narses, the Roman army annihilated the Franks.⁸² Agathias attributed this and other Roman victories to Narses' 'excellent generalship'.⁸³ At the fateful battle of Battle of Taginae in 552 against the Goths, Procopius lauded Narses for outwitting the brave but rash 'barbarian king' Totila. Narses proved to be the better tactician and strategist.⁸⁴

Of course, Roman and Byzantine generalship had never focused heavily on courage or physicality. According to Agathias, the foremost quality of an effective general was 'brains and not brawn'.⁸⁵ Procopius criticised generals for reckless fighting on the frontline or for relying solely upon their personal courage and strength in battle.⁸⁶ In his mind, effective generals used their mental discipline to adapt to the often-fickle circumstances of battle. By employing the proper strategy and tactics, and by arming, consulting, inspiring and disciplining one's men, one could defeat courageous enemies like Totila and his Goths.⁸⁷ These historians, in turn, were following established Byzantine military practices. Byzantine military manuals maintained that generals should avoid combat. The *Strategikon* (c. 600), for instance, advised that a general should find a safe place to observe his army, so as better to guide his men during the shifting tides of battle. Warning that generals should never take part in 'raids or other reckless attacks', the author further alerts his reader that "it is not true, as some inexperienced people believe, that wars are decided by courage and number of troops, but along with God's favour, by tactics and generalship."⁸⁸

As I have argued elsewhere,⁸⁹ Procopius and Agathias undermine Ringrose's contention that neither historian "attributes Narses' success to traditional

81 Agathias, *Histories* 1.7.8: θαυμάζειν δὲ ἔφασαν τῶν Γότων, εἰ μάλα οὕτω πεφρίκασιν ἀνδράριον τι θαλαμηπόλον σκιατραφές τε καὶ ἀβροδίατον καὶ πόρρω τοῦ ἀρρενωποῦ τεταγμένον.

82 Agathias, *Histories* 1.6.8, 1.22.6.

83 Agathias, *Histories* 2.9.1.

84 Rance 2005, 426.

85 Agathias, *Histories* 2.22.5: οὕτως ἄρα τὸ στρατηγεῖν οὐ σώματος βώμη, μάλλον μὲν οὖν φρονήσει δοτέον.

86 E. g., Procopius, *Wars* 5.18.5.

87 Whately 2016, 152–157, 188–195.

88 *Strategikon* 2.16, 7.1 (trans. Dennis).

89 Stewart 2015.

courageous manliness”.⁹⁰ Examples from each reveal the opposite. Procopius reported that Narses’ supporters hoped that the eunuch would achieve fame through ‘deeds of wisdom and courage’.⁹¹ Agathias too described Narses as ‘courageous and heroic’.⁹² The use of the Greek term *andreia* by both historians is significant for the gendered aspect of Ringrose’s argument. As Edward Cohen suggests, “Even in cases where ‘courage’ seems an appropriate translation (for *andreia*) the broader concept of ‘manliness’ always determines the Classical conceptualization of ‘courage’.”⁹³ Moreover, one should not assume that Narses did not put himself in danger during these battles, despite the eunuch’s diminutive stature. Agathias described Narses on horseback leading his men into a skirmish against the Franks.⁹⁴ Narses’ age (he was over 70 during the events depicted in book 8 of Procopius’ *Wars*) probably represented the primary reason that Narses, unlike Solomon, did not play a larger role in combat, more than the fact that he was a former court eunuch.

Later Byzantine historians largely shared Procopius’ and Agathias’ respect for Narses.⁹⁵ We see, in the 12th century, a successful eunuch-general described as ‘a new Narses’.⁹⁶ Somewhat more surprisingly, non-Byzantine western sources from the 6th to the 9th centuries have also passed down respectful portraits of Narses. They mention his eunuch status, but focus extensively on his military and political achievements. For example, Marius of Avenches, writing in the Frankish kingdom of Burgundy in the early 580s, lauded Narses’ accomplishments in Italy:

After Narses, former superintendent [of the sacred bedchamber] and patrician, had laid low so many usurpers—that is Baudila [Totila] and Tēias, kings of the Goths; and Buccelin, a duke of the Franks; as well as Sindual the Herule—he was recalled from Italy in this year, by the above mentioned Augustus [Justin II] having commendably restored Milan and other towns the [Ostro-]Goths had destroyed.⁹⁷

90 Ringrose 2003, 133.

91 Procopius, *Wars* 6.18.7 (trans. Dewing): [...] ἔργα ξυνέσεώς τε καὶ ἀνδρείας.

92 Agathias, *Histories* 1.16.12 (trans. Frendo): [...] τὸ δὲ ἀνδρεῖον καὶ μεγαλουργὸν ...’

93 Cohen 2003, 145.

94 Agathias, *Histories* 1.16.2, 1.21.5.

95 See, e. g., Malalas, *Chronicle* 484, 486; Evagrius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.24; John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.1.39.

96 Tougher 2008, 152.

97 Marius of Avenches, *Chron.* s. a. 568 (trans. Murray).

From his vantage in 560s North Africa, Victor Tonnensis sounded a bit more surprised at Narses' triumphs, recording: "The eunuch Narses a patrician and ex-prefect, in battle quite miraculously overcame Totila the king of the Goths, and killed him and took all of his riches."⁹⁸ Writing in 590s post-imperial Gaul, Gregory of Tours—who opposed Byzantine/Roman rule in Italy—depicted Narses as a formidable military commander.⁹⁹ After conflating and exaggerating the Frank's successes in their military campaigns in Italy in 538 and 553/554, Gregory admitted that Narses had succeeded in revitalising the Roman army. He then explained that Narses' slaying of the Frankish general Buccelin had placed Italy firmly into imperial hands.¹⁰⁰ Later western sources also emphasised Narses' martial achievements. For instance, while lamenting the devastating aftermath of Justinian's reconquest of Italy, the ninth-century Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis commended Narses for his numerous military victories.¹⁰¹

Significantly, for our purposes, even western sources that subscribed to Narses' anachronistic 'betrayal' of Italy to the Lombards, first recorded in Isidore of Seville's *Chronicle* from 616, portray Narses' reasoning for the 'duplicity' in a sympathetic light.¹⁰² As Shaun Tougher has recently stressed, western writers mostly twisted the story to Narses' advantage. The anonymous author of the *LP*, the seventh-century Fredegar, and Paul the Deacon transform Narses into a maligned ex war-hero who valiantly resisted attempts by the emperor Justin II and the empress Sophia to dismiss him from Italy and return him to his former 'domestic and feminine' life within Constantinople.¹⁰³ Building upon earlier accounts, Paul wrote: "[...] because he was a eunuch, she [Sophia] is said to have sent him this message, that she would make him portion out to the girls in the women's chamber the daily tasks of wool." Paul has Narses respond that, "he would begin to weave her such a web as that she could not lay down as long as she lived."¹⁰⁴ As Agathias had explained previously, Narses

98 Victor Tonnensis, *Chron.* s.a. 553 (trans. in Martyn 2007, 46).

99 Reimitz 2016, 58–79.

100 Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum* 4.9.

101 Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, *Petrus Senior* (Deliannis 2006, 260.78–81): Narsique patricius obiit Romae, postquam gessit multas uictorias in Italia cum denuatione omnium Romanorum Italiae, in palacio quieuit; nonagesimo quinto uitae suae anno mortuus est.

102 E. g., Isidore of Seville, *Chronicon* 116; *LP*, *John III*, ch. 3–4, *LP* 1:305; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 2.5.

103 Tougher 2015; Cf. Brown 2013, where Brown demonstrates that Paul also lauded Narses' Christian virtues.

104 Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 2.5: Tunc Augustus in tantum adversus Narsetem commotus est, ut statim in Italiam Longinum praefectum mitteret, qui Narsetis

had moved beyond such gendered rhetoric. Now, instead of the offensive Germanic barbarians found in Agathias, in these western accounts it is the Byzantine emperor and his wife that must learn the consequences of trusting in stale eunuch *topoi*, and consequently underestimating the new-world eunuch Narses.

Conclusion

The eastern and western historiographers surveyed in this chapter illustrate that, by the 6th and 7th centuries, the old Byzantine cultural construction of 'eunuch' had become insufficient to contain individual eunuchs. Eunuchs would continue to serve as exarchs in Italy until the exarchate fell in 751. In Byzantium, they continued to wield considerable power until the 13th century. I do not mean to claim that eunuchs after the 5th century were always treated in non-gendered ways. Eunuch-commanders who experienced defeat on the field of battle faced gendered and, at times, eunuch-specific vitriol.¹⁰⁵

Yet, we have found an answer to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter of why seventh-century eunuch-exarchs tried to usurp imperial power in Italy. Solomon, Narses, Eleutherius, and Olympius may have emanated from the Byzantine East, but they had made names for themselves as powerful generals and *de facto* political leaders in the largely non-Greek-speaking West. As we have seen, the post-Roman kingdoms of Ostrogothic Italy and Vandalic North Africa had accepted and adopted eunuchs as symbols of their own *Romanitas*. It was then an easier step for successful military eunuch-generals like Solomon and Narses to take on semi-imperial roles in post-reconquest North Africa and Italy. Basking in the aura of imperial authority that continued to impress Byzantines and non-Byzantines alike in an increasingly post-imperial West, these men had proven their leadership skills. Little wonder, then, that these puissant eunuchs had broken down many of the old barriers regarding just what a eunuch could hope to achieve on the empire's western fringes.

locum obtineret Narsis vero, his cognitis, valde pertimuit; et in tantum maxime ab eadem Sophia Augusta territus est, ut regredi ultra Constantinopolim non auderet. Cui illa inter cetera, quia eunuchus erat, haec fertur mandasse, ut eum puellis in genicio lanarum faceret pensa dividere. Ad quae verba Narsis dicitur haec responsa dedisse: talem se eidem telam orditurum, qualem ipsa, dum viveret, deponere non possit. Cf. *Origo gentis Langobardorum*, 2.5: Ipse Albuin adduxit Langobardes in Italia, invitatos a Narsete scribarum.

105 See, e. g., the eleventh-century John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History* 16.8.

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The Orient Express: Abbot John's Rapid Trip from Constantinople to Ravenna c. AD 700

Ann Moffatt

In the 830s and 840s Andreas Agnellus, an abbot and priest of Ravenna, produced an account of the bishops of his native city down to his own day, starting from when St Peter himself would have sent his companion Apollinaris there from Rome, after ordaining him bishop.¹ The starting-point for this paper is the story of an abbot's overnight express trip home by sea from Constantinople to Ravenna in ca AD 700.² Abbot John's amazing achievement is one of the miracles in Agnellus' account of Archbishop Damian who occupied the Ravenna see from 27 February 692 to 13 May 708.³

By AD 700 it was just over a century and a half since Justinian's general Belisarius had taken the city from the Ostrogoths in 540. Ravenna and the area around the lower reaches of the Po then remained in Byzantine hands until 751 as the Exarchate of Ravenna, governed by an exarch appointed by the Byzantine emperor and supported by a military force. By the 9th century, however, when Agnellus was writing, the situation in Ravenna was very different. From 568 on, most of the rest of northern Italy fell to the Lombards, but only in 751 were they finally able to take Ravenna and its territory from the Byzantines. Then, four years later, the Franks under Pippin III forced the Lombard king

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- 1 Agnellus, born in ca 780, wrote his account with some interruptions over a period from ca 830 to beyond 846 and the death of his contemporary, Archbishop George (837–846), with the later chapters written after the end of the second period of iconoclasm (815–843): Deliyannis, 'Introduction' in Agnellus 2006, 11–19. He refers only indirectly to iconoclasm which was imperial policy in the years 726–787 and 815–843, while the Ravenna bishops steadfastly supported the iconodule stance of the papacy: Deliyannis 1996.
 - 2 From the late 6th century until the early 11th century the sea route was preferred for travel between western Europe and Constantinople because the land route across the Balkans was blocked by the incursions of the Serbs and Croats and, in the late 9th century, those of the Magyars. Finally, after the conversion of the Hungarians, it became accessible to the crusaders: Leyser 1973, 29, 32–33; Balard 2000, 257–59.
 - 3 Agnellus 2006, §§125–134. The dates given for the reigns of the bishops of Ravenna are those calculated by Deliyannis: 'Introduction' in Agnellus 2006, 94–115 and eadem 2010, 304.

Aistulf out of Ravenna and, in 756, ceded Ravenna to the papacy. Thereafter, though quasi-autonomous, the city and its territory was part of the Papal State.

Even under the exarchate, although the Byzantine emperors controlled the region at least nominally in civil and military terms, the church, through its archbishop, exercised considerable civic as well as religious authority. Taxes were paid to the Byzantine empire, military service was exacted and troops were settled in the exarchate, but Ravenna's archbishops for most of this period were consecrated by the pope. Nevertheless, in some religious disputes, the church of Ravenna supported the eastern cause and often sought independence from the influence of Rome. In 666, when Constans II was emperor, the Ravenna church briefly became autocephalous, having gained the right to elect and consecrate its archbishop. Two archbishops were so elected but then the Papacy reasserted its right in 682 and Damian, in 692, was consecrated in Rome. Even in the late 8th and 9th century Ravenna's archbishops continued to hope that their church might again become autonomous. Agnellus shared this hope.⁴

Archbishop Damian

For Ravenna's heyday in the 5th and 6th centuries Agnellus had good sources to draw on, both written and monumental. However, at least from the latter part of the 6th century Agnellus had more limited material.⁵ When it came to his account of Archbishop Damian, he produced a narrative which, unusually, was concocted almost entirely from five tales based on hearsay or from accounts of local miracles and events in the city that had acquired the status of legend.⁶

Agnellus does mention early in his account of Damian one piece of historical evidence, namely that Iohanicis, an ancestor on his mother's side, had returned to Ravenna from Constantinople where he had been a notary in the imperial court.⁷ A description of the mutilation and exile of the emperor

4 Brown 1995a, 333–338; Deliyannis 2004, 51; Deliyannis 2010, 283–286. For the influence on his narrative of Agnellus' narrowly focused local pride: Brown 1986.

5 For Agnellus' sources: Deliyannis in Agnellus 2006, 22–52.

6 Agnellus 2005, 125–134. For Ravenna in the late 7th and early 8th century: Simonini 1969, 117–132; Brown 2008, 433–440; Deliyannis 2010, 277–297.

7 The bilingual Iohanicis had served on the staff of the exarch Theodore (678–687) before becoming a notary in the imperial court: Agnellus 2006, §120 and end §125. For a much less dramatic account of this attack on Ravenna and its archbishop: *LP* 1:170 (*Vita Constantini* §2).

Justinian II in 695, in which Ravennate citizens in Constantinople probably played a part, is held over and placed in Agnellus' account of Damian's successor, Archbishop Felix (709–725).⁸ There he tells how, having recovered the throne in 705, a vengeful Justinian several years later had Ravenna attacked and leading citizens taken captive to Constantinople, including Archbishop Felix and Iohanicis whose cruel fates Agnellus vividly describes. Importantly Tom Brown sees this episode as marking a radical change in Agnellus' attitude to the Byzantines. It seems likely that at least by 705 Iohanicis had quit his employment as a notary at the imperial court and also likely that it was prior to 705 that Abbot John sought help from an emperor in Constantinople.⁹

Towards the end of his account of Damian, Agnellus provides three other items of historical information. Damian, he says, was from Dalmatia, but his parents offered him to the church of Ravenna ... and he became archbishop of this church. He adds, 'Now this was in the time of the emperor Constantine [IV]' (668–685). Agnellus then says that 'at that time' (*eo tempore*) the Ravenna church's archive was destroyed by a fire, and along with it many title-deeds (*monumenta*) went up in flames.¹⁰ The phrase *eo tempore* here could refer to the time of Constantine¹¹ but, as Deliyannis has noted, Agnellus characteristically strings together separate items derived from an annalistic source to create a seamless narrative.¹² In reality, while Damian was offered to the church of Ravenna in the time of Constantine IV, the other events took place later, after his son Justinian II had inherited the throne. Deliyannis therefore dates this

8 For Felix: Agnellus 2006, §§136–150. Justinian II's rule was from 685–695 and 705–711, ending in his assassination.

9 Agnellus 2006, §138 (the blinding of Felix) and §141 (the torture and death of Iohanicis); Brown 1995b, 35; idem 2008, 322–323.

10 Agnellus 2006, §134: *Eo tempore archiuius ecclesiae istius ab igne concrematus est et ibidem multa monumenta flamma consumpsit*. He goes on to explain that many of these title-deeds were seized and hidden away by wicked men. Then the bishop cursed with anathema whoever did not return the aforementioned title-deeds.

11 Documents were also destroyed in the time of Constantine IV when Damian's predecessor, the archbishop Theodore (677–691), deliberately burned in the furnace of his bathhouse the old ecclesiastical records of customary law regarding payments to the clergy after he had produced a revised version: Agnellus 2006, §§118–119. Likewise Damian's successor, Felix, personally burnt all the works that he had written other than one about the Day of Judgment that was saved: Agnellus 2006, §136.

12 Deliyannis in Agnellus 2006, 28, notes that Agnellus tends to draw together separate items from an annalistic source to create a seemingly connected narrative.

fire to ca AD 700 when, indeed, Damian was archbishop.¹³ This fire, then, could help to account for the paucity of Agnellus' information about Damian and some other surprising omissions in his record. Such fires and similar accidents, leading to loss of records, would have complicated some legal and especially property disputes and even have led to the later forging of documents.

The focus of this paper is on the fourth of five carefully structured miracle tales that occupy the bulk of Agnellus' account of Archbishop Damian and provide a context for the fourth story. The first, third and fifth are relatively short and contain variations on common enough stories of miracles wrought by God. While they are didactic and even entertaining, a strong sense of reality is created in their settings. For example, the first tells of a distraught mother who came wanting Damian to bless her dying baby. The bishop's servants would not inform him of her presence but made her wait because he was being shaved. The small baby died, the woman screamed, a crowd gathered, and the bishop asked what had happened. As he wept and prayed, the tiny baby held in his arms came back to life for just long enough for Damian to bless him with the sign of the cross.¹⁴

The second tale is an extended and lurid account of ritualized fighting between districts of the city which resulted one Sunday in considerable bloodshed and deaths. The details of location and destructive rampaging in the city suggest that, rather than just a Sunday afternoon ritual getting out of hand, a memory of some more significant urban conflict has been preserved here, probably in an oral tradition. Only after Damian instigated a three-day period of fasting and a religious procession, which was followed by an earthquake revealing the mass burial-places of those slaughtered, was reconciliation achieved.¹⁵ While the parallels with known examples of fighting between the demes in cities in Late Antiquity have attracted attention, Agnellus' tale would have been fuelled by memories of discord in Ravenna in the 8th century and notably in the second reign of Justinian II (685–695 and 705–711). The point that Agnellus is leading up to, however, is the role Archbishop Damian played as peace-maker.¹⁶

13 Deliyannis 2010, 14, noting significantly that this archive 'probably contained many documents which pertained to the legal rights and property of the Ravennate church'.

14 Agnellus 2006, §125.

15 Agnellus 2006, §§126–129. Of course earthquakes are more likely to result in mass burials in the rubble than to reveal them.

16 For an explanation of this whole episode: Brown 1998, 82–86. See also Brown 1984, 100–101, 159–163.

The third miracle took place in Damian's cathedral church of the Anastasis, known as the Ursiana from the name of its founder, Bishop Ursus. While, like the first and fifth, this is a very short tale, it is constructed with three distinct elements. A very pious man used to lean against the front column in the church and sing the psalms before the mass and, during the mass, he used to gaze at the bishop's face. Questioned by Damian, he replied, 'I am not gazing at you so much as him who stands behind you, whose beauty I cannot fully contemplate, and when you consecrate the host he stands beside you'. One Sunday when everyone was singing the antiphon at the time of the benediction, 'Mountains and hills were singing praises in the presence of God,'¹⁷ this man said that the actual stones of the church were singing the antiphon along with them. Within a few days the man died, and when he was buried the bishop had a small barrier made for the column so that no-one would tread with unworthy feet where he had stood, and a small cross was affixed to it as a memorial which was still there in Agnellus' day.¹⁸

The fourth miracle tale is again an extended narrative, like the second, and concerns the abbot, John, who made a miraculous overnight trip home from Constantinople to Ravenna.¹⁹ The fifth and last tale, like the first and third, is succinct. It involves a Jew who was accustomed to stand apart within the Ursiana church during the mass. One day he ran to the altar asking Damian for a portion of the body of the lamb being torn apart in his hands. When he was told he was not entitled to share in this, the Jew's response was to say, 'I ask for the flesh of the lamb which I see, not the bread which I do not see'. He then received instruction and was baptized.²⁰ Though the story need not be specific to the time or place, it appears to be relevant around the year 700. Canon 82 of the Quinisext Council in Trullo, convened by Justinian II in Constantinople in 692, forbade the representation in art of John the Baptist pointing to a lamb as prefiguring Christ. The pope, however, and some of his immediate successors, had refused to accept the canons as several were contrary to western practice.²¹

17 Cf. Isaiah 55.12.

18 Agnellus 2006, §130.

19 Agnellus 2006, §131–132.

20 Agnellus 2006, §133.

21 When a copy of the canons was sent to Pope Sergius (687–701) for his confirmation and signature, he rejected them outright. Moreover this same pope ordered that, at the breaking of the bread in the Eucharist, the 'Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy on us', should be sung by clergy and people alike: Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 162–163; *LP* 1:160 and 163 (Vita Sergii §6 and §14); Davis 2000, 86–89; Noble 1984, 16–17; Brubaker and Haldon 2011, 61.

Abbot John's Travails

Now the second extended narrative, the fourth tale, is the fabulous story about John, priest and abbot of the monastery of St John ad Titum, popularly known as St John at the Pine, on the northern outskirts of Ravenna's port city of Classe.²² He made the trip to Constantinople seeking imperial support in disputes and court cases over his monastery's property,²³ problems quite conceivably linked to that fire that had then only recently destroyed the Ravenna church's archives and along with it many title-deeds. After gaining the emperor's support, John made his miraculous return overnight to Ravenna.

Agnellus could have had some sympathy for John's plight. He himself was a priest and abbot of two monasteries, one dedicated to Santa Maria ad Blachernas which, when still a boy, he had received from Archbishop Martin (ca 810–818) on the payment of 200 gold solidi. Agnellus remembered Martin as a big man, about 80 years old and able to grasp in his large left hand the two purses Agnellus presented to him.²⁴

Later Agnellus inherited the monastery of St Bartholomew from his cousin Sergius, a deacon. Once it had belonged to men who had become archbishops, Maurus (642–671) and Felix (709–725) who was Damian's successor.²⁵ Now, up to two centuries after Maurus and Felix, Agnellus explained how his own archbishop, George, formerly his close friend, after becoming archbishop (837–846) had, for a few years, deprived him of this monastery of St Bartholomew and its church. He had removed all the priests and seized all of the monastery's property and all the church's treasures which George's own predecessors, namely Maurus and Felix, had acquired for it.²⁶

There was also the case of an uncle of Agnellus' mother, Deusdedit, who had suffered similarly at the hands of Archbishop John VI the Younger (778–785). Deusdedit had inherited the monastery of St Martin in Aqua Longa from his

22 Agnellus 2006, 131–132; Deichmann 1976, II.2, 335–336: *Monasterium Beatorum Johannis et Stephani in Civitate Classis*. This monastery of St John was first attested in two letters of Gregory the Great (Norberg 1982, 5.25 and 8.17; trans. Martyn 2004). The second of these was addressed to Ravenna's archbishop Marinianus (595–606).

23 Brown 1984, 154 and n. 2, provides examples of the quite frequent practice at this time of referring disputes to Constantinople, including this case of Abbot John and also Catania's appeal for help in dealing with the magician Heliodoros for which see below.

24 Agnellus 2006, §167; Deichmann 1976, II.2, 341.

25 Agnellus 2006, §110 and §136; Deichmann 1976, II.2, 318. Oral and written traditions, if preserved within this monastery, could have influenced Agnellus' detailed accounts of the reigns of these archbishops.

26 Agnellus 2006, §136.

father Peter, a landowner with the military rank of tribune. Every day, says Agnellus, the archbishop was plotting how to seize this monastery. He could not do this by force because of the nobility of the boy's family, and he cursed him. On the feast of Ravenna's patron saint, St Apollinaris, the boy offered the archbishop a present which he refused, saying to Deusdedit, 'May I see your death and then may I die'. Rejected and humiliated, the lad went away weeping and told his widowed mother how the archbishop even refused to give him the sacraments. Well, in due course Deusdedit, weakened by a stomach ailment, did die and Agnellus' grandfather, Andreas, attended the funeral which was later described in detail by Agnellus. The archbishop, when told of Deusdedit's death, thanked the Lord and blessed Apollinaris for having heard him. He ordered a goblet of wine and, on drinking half a cup, felt a sharp pain and died just seven days after the death of Deusdedit.²⁷

Agnellus' own experience of George seizing his monastery of St Bartholomew, if only for a short time, and the experience of his ancestor Deusdedit, could have contributed to his including in his account of Damian, the story of how Abbot John, in ca AD 700, had dealt with the disputes and court cases over his monastery's property by seeking support from the emperor in Constantinople. When he arrived in the capital, for many days John was unable to gain an audience with the emperor.²⁸ His solution was to stand outside below the emperor's bedroom and sing what was a particularly appropriate variant of the invitatory, the invitation to praise the Lord. This was normally Psalm 95/94 beginning, *Venite, exsultemus Domino*:

Come! Come! Let us raise a joyful song to the Lord ... Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving ... the farthest places of the earth are in his hands.

John's variant drew on different texts:

He who is to come will come; he will not delay. The majesty, the power and the imperial rule are in his hands.²⁹

²⁷ Agnellus 2006, §163.

²⁸ The emperors in the years when Damian was archbishop (692–708) included, notably, Justinian II from 685 to 695, who was then exiled after having his nose cut off and, according to Agnellus, also his ears: §127. Next were Leontios and Tiberios III, and then Justinian II again (705–711).

²⁹ Hebrews 10.37 and cf. Daniel 7.14.

The emperor, delighted, called him up and John explained his mission.

Agnellus, using legal terminology, tells us that the emperor ordered a charter (praeceptum) to be written to the effect that the property of John's monastery should be held in perpetuity and that this title-deed should have the force of law for ever. John also extracted from the emperor a dated and sealed letter addressed to the exarch of Ravenna to the effect that John's guarantor should not incur any legal obligations because, in fact, the very next day, John had been due to appear in court in Ravenna to face his adversary. The letter prescribed that in this case there should be no provisos, nor should anyone take John to court, nor should his guarantor incur obligations, nor should anyone bring any arguments against him.³⁰

Armed with these documents, towards evening John went to the harbour hoping to find a ship calling at Ravenna or bound for Sicily from where he could expect to be able to continue on to Ravenna.³¹ However, John could not find a ship. He enquired in vain of all the small craft (carabi), fast sailing ships (chelandia) and the powerful dromons. It was now dark but there was some moonlight as John walked along the seashore wondering what to do. Three men clothed in black appeared and, addressing him by name, asked him what was troubling him. They said that if he did as they said, the next day he would be home; so he agreed. With a stick he was to draw a ship in the sand, its sails, oars and the ship's boats and sailors. He was to lie in the ship's hull, in the bilge, near the keel.³² Once out at sea he would hear the roaring of winds and rough seas and the cries of those in danger but, significantly, he was not to call out or make the sign of the cross. There was indeed a raging storm, oars and sail-yards were broken, the ship's boats came adrift, and 'the very black sailors' indulged in hideous wailing.³³ Then around cockcrow John found himself on the roof of his monastery. Initially his people were reluctant to fetch ladders and bring

30 Agnellus 2006, §131, lines 248–250 and 353: quia crastina dies erit constitutum placitum, ut ego cum aduersario meo in conflictu stare debuisssem ... nec ullo modo eum molestaret.

31 John could have hoped to find there a ship bound for Ravenna since the Ravenna church had extensive holdings there and very likely its own grain ships: Fasoli 1991, 392–394.

32 *cathaleta*: 'hull'. The term here and at §137, line 76, is otherwise unattested. It is probably formed from Greek κατά and ἄλς, 'under the sea'; hence in *cathaleta navis*: 'in the hull of the ship': Agnellus 2004, 255. Cf also κάθαλος: 'full of salt' (LSJ).

33 Black men signify demons, agents of the devil: Pratsch 2005, 167. In the Greek *Life of St Neilos of Rossano* in Calabria (d. 1004), written by his disciple, these black agents of the devil are called Ethiopians: *Vita Nili iun.* 1972, 51, §5.

him down, thinking him a phantom.³⁴ To have landed on the roof suggests logically that for the last stage of his journey he must have taken to the air.³⁵

The notion of salvation from a storm at sea through an appeal to God was well-known to Agnellus. He gave an example of it earlier when he recorded the fifth-century inscription in the apse of the Church of St John the Evangelist in Ravenna which stated that the empress Galla Placidia and her children had built the church to fulfil the vow they had made to God when they were in danger of perishing in a storm at sea.³⁶ Here, however, this topos has been inverted.³⁷ Instead of invoking God John had remained silent. By obeying the instructions of the magicians and resorting to magic he was the counterpart to his miracle-working bishop Damian.

Towards the end of the 7th century the practice of magic had been very publicly condemned. In Rome Sergius (687–701) was elected pope over two rival contenders, one of whom, Paschal, had in vain attempted to win the support of the exarch John Platyn by bribery. Soon afterwards Paschal was deprived of the office of archdeacon and confined in a monastery ‘because of certain incantations and witchcraft he was practising and because he was dealing in fortune-telling and other soothsayers.’³⁸

Then in 692 the emperor Justinian II convened the Council in Trullo with the aim of creating uniformity in the practices of the eastern and western churches. Pope Sergius refused to put his signature to the canons of the Council because some contravened western practices such as clerical celibacy.³⁹ Subsequently, however, there was a compromise and popes like Constantine I (708–758), Hadrian I (772–795) and John VIII (872–882) formally accepted the Council

34 For the topos of being saved from perishing during a storm at sea by invoking the name of Christ: Pratsch 2005, 257–259.

35 The tale of Abbot John making a magical overnight return to Ravenna appears to Borri to have been cobbled onto the main story, the conflict over the property of his monastery. Indeed there was no longer a deadline to be met following John's successful appeal to the emperor. Moreover, Borri observes that here there is no miracle, as might be expected, but an example of magic similar to the flying ships and storm-makers to be found elsewhere in early medieval literature: Borri 2014, 41–61.

36 Agnellus 2006, §42; Deliyannis 2010, 62–70. This church of San Giovanni Evangelista has been much restored and the inscription itself, *CIL* XI.267e, has not survived; Deichmann 1974, II.1, 94–95.

37 Agnellus 2006, §131; Martínez Pizarro 1995, 13–14; 88–92.

38 *LP* 1:159 (Vita Sergii §5); Davis 2000, 86.

39 When Pope Sergius refused to sign, Justinian sent for him to be taken to Constantinople, but the soldiers of Ravenna and surrounding region entered Rome and prevented this: *LP* 1:160–161 (Vita Sergii §§6–9); Davis 2000, 86–87.

with the exception of those canons that were at variance with the Roman rite.⁴⁰ Canon 61 of the Council in Trullo forbidding recourse to magicians was not contentious.

Concerning diviners, sorcerers and those who train bears.

Those who have recourse to diviners, or to so-called 'centurions',⁴¹ or to any such persons, in order to learn from them whatever it is they want to discover, shall be subject to the canonical penalty of six years, in accordance with the decrees made by the Fathers not long ago in such matters ...⁴²

Precedents for Incredibly Rapid Travel

There are ancient precedents for wonderfully rapid travel in the Biblical prophet Ezekiel, the Greek philosopher Pythagoras, and a Neopythagorean, Apollonios of Tyana. In the early 6th century BC the prophet Ezekiel was sent by the Lord to warn the Israelites of the imminent destruction of the Temple because of their worshipping of idols. The Book of Ezekiel describes a spirit appearing to Ezekiel saying:

'You must speak my words to them' Then I saw a hand stretched out to me, holding a scroll ... Then he said to me, 'Man, ... Eat this scroll; then go and speak to the Israelites'.... Then a spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a fierce rushing sound as the glory of the Lord rose from his place ... A spirit lifted me and carried me along ... So I came to the exiles at Tel-abib (in Chaldaea).⁴³

In a later chapter Ezekiel says:

I was sitting at home and the elders of Judah were with me. Suddenly the hand of the Lord God came upon me, and I saw what looked like a man. He seemed to be all fire from the waist down and to shine and glitter like brass from the waist up. He stretched out what seemed a hand and seized

⁴⁰ Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 7–9; Gallagher 2008, 588.

⁴¹ Fögen 1995, 101, sheds some light on the use of the term 'centurions' in this context, noting that Symeon Metaphrastes describes a hekatontarchos as 'the leader of all demons'.

⁴² Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 140–142; Fögen 1995, 99, 110–111.

⁴³ Ezekiel 2.7, 9; 3.1, 12, 14–15.

me by the forelock. A spirit lifted me up between heaven and earth, and carried me to Jerusalem.⁴⁴

It was said that Pythagoras, also in the 6th century BC, who taught the transmigration of souls, actually had the gift of bilocation himself. He had been in Turi only to appear at the same time in Metaponto, cities in Southern Italy ca 100 kilometres apart. For this our source of ca AD 200 is Philostratos the Athenian's *Life of Apollonios of Tyana*. Apollonios himself was a Neopythagorean holy man of the 1st century AD whom Philostratos described as having moved instantaneously from Izmir to Ephesus, a distance of ca 75 kilometres, and on another occasion from Rome to Puteoli near Naples, a distance of c. 215 kilometres.⁴⁵

There are stories of rapid translocation in the Lives of two Byzantine saints: Joseph the Hymnographer, a contemporary of Agnellus, and the poorly attested miracle-worker Leo, bishop of Catania. Joseph was born in Sicily ca 810 and died in 886. There are two accounts of his life, one which is short, written soon after his death by his disciple Theophanes, a younger contemporary, a monk and priest who became abbot of the monastery that the saint had established late in life.⁴⁶ The second, by John the Deacon, is a later, longer and more encomiastic Life, written in the late 10th or first half of the 11th century and differing at some points from the Life by Theophanes, notably in his super-fast airborne return from Crete to Constantinople.⁴⁷ Both versions say that when the Arabs were taking Sicily Joseph fled with his parents first to the Peloponnese and before long to Thessaloniki. There he became a priest, met Gregory Dekapolites and accompanied him to Constantinople in ca 840. The situation under the iconoclast emperor Theophilus (Oct. 829-Jan. 842) was getting worse and in 841 Gregory sent Joseph and other iconodules on a mission to seek help from Pope Gregory IV (827–844). However, en route they were captured at sea by Arabs and imprisoned on Crete.

There, according to Theophanes, Joseph encouraged his fellow prisoners with prayers and hymnody. He even succeeded in converting a prominent bishop from his iconoclastic beliefs. One night a figure, St Nicholas of Myra, appeared to him in his prison cell saying to him, 'Take this scroll'. Joseph then sang the words written on it, 'Hasten, merciful one, and in compassion come quickly to our aid', the refrain from Romanos the Hymnographer's kontakion

44 Ezekiel 8.1–3.

45 Philostratos 2006, 4.10 (1: 338–41); 8.10–12 (2: 341–49).

46 On Theophanes' Life of Joseph (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1901), see Ševčenko 1998, 101–102.

47 John the Deacon, PG 105; Ševčenko 1998, 102.

On the Three Children.⁴⁸ Early the next morning, miraculously Joseph was released and returned to Constantinople.

In the later, extended version by John the Deacon the events are more vividly described with some elements increasingly improbable.⁴⁹ It was Christmas Eve and, after spending the night singing praises to God and producing many hymns, at cockcrow St Nicholas appeared to the imprisoned Joseph and brought him the happy news that the emperor Theophilus was ill and dying.⁵⁰ As in the earlier account, Nicholas then gave Joseph a little document which, this time, he was to eat. Then, when he sang the words that were written on it, namely the refrain from Romanos' kontakion, immediately he was freed from his shackles and Joseph heard Nicholas say, 'Follow me', and:

O the miracle, O the speed of help, O the ineffable and remarkable wonders of God! He seemed to cut through the air invisibly, untouched, as though carried by the wind to the greatest city of all [Constantinople].⁵¹

A much closer parallel to Abbot John's miraculous express trip home from Constantinople to Ravenna was first recognized by Francesco Lanzoni in the *Life of St Leo*, bishop of Catania and miracle-worker, which exists in five Greek versions.⁵² Leo is said to have come from Ravenna, responsible in the first place for the Ravenna church's property in Catania but who, on the death of its bishop, Sabinos, was appointed his successor.⁵³ The *Life of Leo* is extraordinary in that the bulk of the text of the two significant prose versions is devoted not to Leo but to the antics of a wicked magician in Catania called Heliodoros who twice travelled between Catania and Constantinople in one day.⁵⁴

48 Romanus 1970, *Cantica* 46, *On the Three Children*.

49 John the Deacon, PG 105. 960A-D, §22.

50 The iconoclast Theophilus died on 22 January 842 and in March 843 the Triumph of Orthodoxy was formally proclaimed.

51 John the Deacon, PG 105. 960D, §22; Beck 1959, 601.

52 Lanzoni 1915, 795–797. Lanzoni knew the Latin translation of the shorter *Life* (BHG 981) published in the *Acta Sanctorum*, apparently unaware of Latyšev's 1914 publication of the Greek text of the longer version (BHG 981b).

53 Neither Sabinos nor Leo is otherwise attested as a bishop of Catania in the 8th century but the list is not complete: *PMBZ* Leo # 4277 and Sabinos # 6470. Acconcia Longo suggests that the name Leo here may have been influenced by the fact that a Leo, bishop of Catania, is attested between 592 and 604 in 16 letters of Gregory the Great either addressed to him or referring to him by name: Acconcia Longo 1989, 12.

54 Acconcia Longo 1989, §§8–16; Alexakis 2011, §§16–27 and 32–34.

The shorter and less fanciful version of the Life of Leo (*BHG* 981) edited by Augusta Acconcia Longo (1989) could, for just this reason, be the closest to the lost original. It is not an abbreviated version based on the longer Life and the two Lives differ substantially in style and significant details. Acconcia Longo argues that the shorter Life was probably composed during the second phase of iconoclasm (815–843) and subsequently sanitized.⁵⁵ The narrative is set in the reign of Leo and Constantine, probably the joint reign of the iconoclasts Leo III and Constantine V (720–741), or possibly of Leo IV and Constantine VI (co-emperors, 775–780).⁵⁶ The author shows far more familiarity with the city of Catania than Constantinople, suggesting that it was written there.⁵⁷

The longer and more elaborate version (*BHG* 981b), written in a markedly higher style, was first published in 1914 by B. Latyšev but in a much more comprehensive edition by Alexandros Alexakis in 2011. Alexakis makes a detailed case suggesting that the longer Life was the source for all the other versions.⁵⁸ As the *ante quem* for its composition he proposes AD 886 on the basis of verbal similarities to the canon for St Leo of Catania by Joseph the Hymnographer who died in ca 886.⁵⁹ He further proposes that it is a crypto-iconodule work written in the environs of Constantinople in the time of the iconoclast emperor Theophilos (829–842).⁶⁰ The co-emperors in some manuscripts of the longer Life of Leo are again Leo and Constantine, but in others Constantine and Justinian. In the latter, less likely case, if the names were not inserted here simply as those of the most famous of Byzantine emperors, the reference would be to the brief period when Constantine IV and Justinian II were co-emperors (681–685). This would make Leo of Catania, himself originally from Ravenna, a near contemporary of Archbishop Damian of Ravenna!

55 Acconcia Longo 1989, 3–98 (edition at 90–98). This version, *BHG* 981, was known previously only in a Latin translation. Scholars had relied on Latyšev's Greek edition of 1914 based on the longer version, *BHG* 981b. Alexander Kazhdan continued to argue in favour of the primacy of this version without fully taking into account Acconcia Longo's detailed argument for the primacy of the shorter version. She presented her case again in 2007 with more detail and, specifically at 30–36, in response to the criticisms made by Kazhdan but published posthumously: Kazhdan 1999, 296–302.

56 Acconcia Longo 2007, 7–8.

57 Acconcia Longo 1989, 36–40.

58 Alexakis 2011, 2–37 and 73. Greenfield, however, in his substantial review of this volume in 2014 was also unconvinced by much of Alexakis' case for the primacy of the longer version.

59 Alexakis 2011, 21–28 and 36 n. 63. The canon is published in the Menaia.

60 Alexakis 2011, 73. Beck had already tentatively suggested dating it to the period of iconoclasm: Beck 1959, 799.

Bishop Leo's arch-rival in Catania, the magician Heliodoros, an apostate from Christianity, was ultimately defeated by the bishop. Because of this magician's outrageous crimes in Catania the eparch had written to the emperors seeking help. They sent an official to take Heliodoros under guard to Constantinople to appear before them, a journey for which they were allowed 30 days there and 30 days back. However, Heliodoros convinced the official to continue enjoying his visit to Catania, having promised him that he could get him and his party back to Constantinople in just one day. Then on their last day he made them swear not to call on the name of Christ but to submerge their heads in the water of a bath in Catania and from there, magically, they emerged in Constantinople in the bathhouse of the imperial palace.⁶¹ The emperors consequently condemned Heliodoros to be beheaded, but the magician demanded first a drink of water and, after dipping himself in the bowl, he disappeared to Catania. Summoned again, Heliodoros used a laurel branch to trace on the sea a ship, its crew, himself and his escort. Then, invoking the name of the demon who protected him, the ship materialized and in the space of a day they reached Constantinople.⁶² There he escaped beheading and again disappeared back to Catania where he parodied Leo conducting the liturgy and threatened to perform acts of blasphemy.

Now Bishop Leo used his own miracle-working powers. According to the shorter account, after putting his liturgical stole (orarium) around the magician's neck and tying it tight, he led him to the place called Achilles (a Roman bath) and there delivered him to the fire. Neither the holy man's hand nor the orarium were withdrawn from the furnace until the wretch was reduced to ash. In the longer version Leo wrapped his pallium around Heliodoros' neck and, grasping him by the throat, entered the great pyre with him, emerging unharmed only when Heliodoros had been reduced to ash.⁶³

The question which of these two prose versions of the Life of Leo is the earlier and closest to an original is still unresolved. The modern editions of both versions are accompanied by detailed discussions, including as to which version of the Life of Leo has primacy, but neither argument is fully convincing. Both editors propose for the composition of their text a date towards the middle of the 9th century during or soon after the second phase of iconoclasm. This was the very time when Agnellus was writing his account of Bishop Damian and the story of Abbot John's miraculous journey home to Ravenna.⁶⁴

61 Acconcia Longo 1989, §10; Alexakis 2011, §21.

62 Acconcia Longo 1989, §12; Alexakis 2011, §25; cf Agnellus 2006, §131.

63 Acconcia Longo 1989, §16; Alexakis 2011, §34.

64 Acconcia Longo 1989, 54–55; Alexakis 2011, 73; Deliannis in Agnellus 2006, 19.

There are striking similarities in details of the express journey of Abbot John and those of the magician Heliodoros, most notably in the drawing of a ship that then magically materialises. In Agnellus it appears in the context of miracles wrought by a compassionate bishop; in the *Life of Leo* it is one of the feats of a wicked magician contrived either to save himself or to harm others. It seems highly likely that this story of a magic ship existed already in popular culture by the mid 9th century and that it is not necessary to conclude that one of the two occurrences, the Latin or the Greek, was the source that inspired the other. While the date when the versions of the *Life of Leo* were originally composed remains controversial, it is undeniable that the story of the magic ship appeared in the 840s in Agnellus' account of Archbishop Damian with its story of Abbot John.

After Abbot John's Return to Ravenna

Abbot John who, at the harbour of Constantinople, had followed the instructions of the three men dressed in black and arrived in Ravenna the next morning around cockcrow, did not burn in hell for his sins. When brought down from the roof of his monastery and reunited with his people it was already dawn and he ordered the semandron to be struck for the dawn service. After the divine office was completed, John slept. The next day having shone forth, he gained an audience with the exarch who accepted the emperor's charter which guaranteed the monastery to John and his successors in perpetuity. He would exact John's pledge to his guarantor which was due because he had failed to treat with his adversary on the specified day. John then referred to the emperor's supporting letter, declaring that his legal liabilities had been made invalid in courts of law, a letter very precisely dated. This letter angered the exarch: 'Tell me, father of lies, when was this letter written?' John answered: 'Yesterday at the ninth hour'. The exarch replied that it was impossible for anyone to go to Constantinople and back within three months.⁶⁵ The exarch now suspected that he was dealing with a forgery. John responded that he was not answerable to the exarch for how he had travelled. 'Just how I returned', he said, 'I will explain to my bishop.'⁶⁶ My activities and my penance are my own business.' John made a final attempt to convince the exarch of the

65 For travel times by sea in this period: McCormick 2001, 483–500.

66 Heraclius in 629 extended the judicial powers of the church in civil matters resulting in Ravenna in a measure of collaboration between exarch and archbishop: Guillou 1969, 164–66; Brown 1979, 2.

authenticity of the documents, challenging him to send representatives with him to Constantinople and if the documents were proven to be false he would stand trial.

Then he went to Damian, his bishop, prostrated himself and explained how the apparitions had led him through the storm and placed him alone on the roof of his monastery. Admonished by his bishop he did true penance and ended his days in peace.⁶⁷ Damian had put into practice the final canon of the Council in Trullo:

That one must consider the disposition of the sinner and the peculiar nature of the sin.

Those who have received from God the power to loose and to bind [cf. Matt. 16.19] must consider the peculiar nature of the sin and the readiness of the sinner for amendment, and thus apply a suitable remedy to the illness, lest, exceeding the mark in one or the other sense, he should fail in obtaining the salvation of the one afflicted. For the illness of sin is not simple in nature, but diverse and complex, abounding in many mischievous ramifications....⁶⁸

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67 Agnellus 2006, §132.

68 Canon 102, Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 183–185.

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Bang For His Buck: Dioscorides as a Gift of the Tenth-Century Byzantine Court

Yvette Hunt

Romanos, Emperor of Constantinople, sent him [al-Nasir ‘Abd al-Rahman III] a message—I think it was in the year AD 948 [337 AM]—and presented him with gifts of great value, including the book of Dioscorides, with pictures of herbs in the marvellous Byzantine style and written in the Greek language.... Romanos wrote in his letter to al-Nasir: ‘Dioscorides’ book cannot be utilized except with the help of a person who knows Greek well and is acquainted with the drugs concerned. If there is someone in your country equipped with the necessary knowledge, you will, O king, derive great profit from the book ...’¹

A superficial reading of this anecdote provokes the question: why would Romanos II send a gift which he already suspected the recipient would be unable to use? Only by placing this gift into the broader cultural context of the period is it possible to fully understand his decision to send an illustrated copy of Dioscorides’ *De Materia Medica*. Books were popular diplomatic gifts, but research into the purpose of gift giving between courts in this period has shown that gifts were intended to illustrate the superiority of the donor over the recipient.² Therefore a close reading of this anecdote with due consideration given to Romanos II’s desire to illustrate the superiority of his own court in Constantinople helps to explain why this particular gift was chosen. According to the Arabic source, the letter which accompanied the gift clearly stated that Al-Rahman required someone who not only had a good understanding of the Greek language, but also an acquaintance with Classical pharmacology, to make use of it; therefore Romanos II forced the Andalusian caliph to

1 Ibn Juljul quoted in Ibn Abi Usaibi’ah, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 13 ‘Ibn Juljul’, trans. Kopf 1971, 633–634. See also Sadek 1983, 9 and Collins 2000, 116–118. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of this chapter whose recommendations directed me to a more nuanced reading of the Greek sources. All unattributed translations are my own.

2 Codoñer 1996, 9–43; Brubaker 2008, 175–195. See also Buc 1997, 99–144 and Cutler 2001, 247–278.

acknowledge the Byzantine emperor's superiority in relation to this element of the Hellenic sciences.³ While this anecdote is well known among the scholars of Dioscorides' dissemination,⁴ there has been no discussion devoted to investigating why Romanos II chose this particular text and how this choice fitted into the broader interaction between Byzantine and Arabic society.

De Materia Medica had been translated into Arabic the previous century in Baghdad, and Ibn Juljul states that this translation was already available to al-Rahman when this new copy arrived.⁵ Therefore an investigation of why al-Rahman decided to acknowledge Byzantine superiority by admitting that he needed assistance to translate the text needs to address the possible advantages that he could obtain as a result. A fuller understanding of these decisions can only be generated by reviewing them within the context of the reception of the Hellenic sciences in both the Byzantine and Abbasid courts, including medical and pharmacological works, especially during the 9th and 10th centuries.

During the caliphate of al-Mamun (AD 813–33), the Abbasid translation movement became a weapon to illustrate Muslim superiority over the Byzantine court. From this time, Abbasid rhetoric promoted the view that their society was superior to that of the Byzantine empire owing to the Arabic appreciation of the ancient Hellenic sciences, which they argued was disregarded in Constantinople in favour of Christianity.⁶ Gutas goes as far as to describe the Abbasid propaganda of the period as anti-Byzantinism becoming philhellenism.⁷ The ninth-century writer al-Gahiz (d. 868), who wrote for al-Mamun and his successors, promoted the theory that the Byzantines were not the true successors to the ancient Greeks (Hellenes)⁸ by stating that the Greek philosophical and scientific knowledge was neither Byzantine nor Christian:

Had the common people but known that the Christians and the Byzantines have neither wisdom nor clarity [of mind] nor depth of thought but are simply clever with their hands ... they would have removed them from

3 Ibn Juljul quoted in Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 13 'Ibn Juljul', trans. Kopf 1971, 634.

4 Riddle 1980, 6.

5 Ibn Juljul quoted in Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 13 'Ibn Juljul', trans. Kopf 1971, 634: "The people of Andalusia continued to use Stephen's [Istifan b. Basil] translation, which had been brought from Baghdad." Collins 2000, 117 argues that this Dioscorides was a different alphabetical version of the text. For a discussion of the Greek manuscript tradition of *De Materia Medica* see Singer 1927, 1–52.

6 See Mavroudi 2015b, 38–40 for a discussion of this material as rhetorical device.

7 Gutas 1998, 85.

8 Gutas 1998, 85–88.

the ranks of the literati and dropped them from the roster of philosophers and sages because works like the *Organon*, *On Coming to Be and Passing Away*, and *Meteorology* were written by Aristotle, and he is neither Byzantine nor Christian; the *Almagest* was written by Ptolemy, and he is neither Byzantine nor Christian; the *Elements* was written by Euclid, and he is neither Byzantine nor Christian; medical books were written by Galen, who was neither Byzantine nor Christian; and similarly with the books by Democritus, Hippocrates, Plato, and so on. All these are individuals of one nation; they have perished but the traces of their minds live on: they are the Greeks. Their religion was different from the religion of the Byzantines, and their culture was different from the culture of the Byzantines. They were scientists, while these people [the Byzantines] are artisans who appropriated the books of the Greeks on account of geographical proximity.⁹

While al-Gahiz does not name Dioscorides here, it should be noted that he includes Galen (an author who wrote about both medicine and pharmacology, who used Dioscorides' work), thus including pharmacology and medicine among the Hellenic sciences which were deemed important to Abbasid society.

In the same period the Arabic philosopher al-Kindi wrote a genealogy which proposed that the eponymous founder of the Hellenes was the brother of the ancestor of the Arabic people.¹⁰ Gruen describes these kinds of genealogies in the Classical period as "fictitious kinships" and "composite identities",¹¹ and suggests that those who adopted this literary device were capturing the "Hellenic mentality."¹² Similar genealogies were continued and rhetorically expanded upon in the 10th century by Arabic scholars like the cultural historian al-Mas'udi.¹³ By divorcing the Byzantines from the Hellenes with whom they promoted kinship, Arabic society claimed a right of inheritance over the Hellenic sciences. In addition to this identification, the Abbasid claim to the Hellenic sciences was supported by the Zoroastrian tradition that these

9 Al-Gahiz, *ar-Radd 'ala n-Nasara*, in *Rasa'il al Gahiz*, trans. Gutas 1998, 87.

10 Yūnān the founder of the Ionians and Qahtān the founder of the Arabs, Gutas 1998, 88. Compare this to Josephus' genealogy of the Greeks (Ionians) and Medes, the sons of Japheth, Javan and Mados, *AJ* 1.124; Millar 2006, 351–359 describes this passage as Josephus borrowing from the Classical tradition. Gruen 2011, 299–302 discusses the history of this genealogy prior to its inclusion in Josephus.

11 Gruen 2011, 253–276.

12 Gruen 2011, 223.

13 Al-Mas'udi, *Murug*, §664 Pellat, quoted by Gutas 1998, 89. In the French translation, this is referred to as Chapter 25 (Maçoudi 1863, 2:242–243). See also El-Cheikh 2004, 104–105.

sciences were originally Persian, as preserved in texts which had been recently translated into Arabic. Abu Sahl, the son of Nawbakht, the Persian astrologer of al-Mansur (AD 754–775), who probably died early in the 9th century¹⁴ was quoted as writing:

Then when he [Darius III] refused to pay the tribute still imposed upon the people of Babylon and the kingdom of Persia, he [Alexander] killed him, Dārā ibn Dārā the king [Darius III], taking possession of his kingdom, destroying his cities, and razing the ramparts built by devils and giants. His destruction [ruined] whatever there was in the different buildings of scientific material, whether inscribed on stone or wood, and with this demolition there were conflagrations, with scattering of the books. Such of these things, however, as were fathered in collections and libraries in the city of Istakhr¹⁵ he had transcribed and translated into the Greek and Coptic tongues. There, after he had finished copying what he had need of, he burned the material written in Persian. But there was a book called Al-Kushtaj from which he took what he needed of the science of the stars, as well as of medicine and the natural sciences. This book and the scientific material, riches, and treasures which he hit upon, together with the scholars, he sent to the land of Egypt.

In the regions of India and China there were left some things which the kings of Persia had copied at the time of their prophet Zoroaster and the wise man Jāmāsb. They cared for them in those places, as their prophet Zoroaster and Jāmāsb had warned them of the actions of Alexander with his conquest of their land and destruction of as many of their books and scientific materials as possible, and of his transferring them to his own country.¹⁶

Abu Sahl included medical texts among this collection of sciences which he argued were originally Persian. A similar tradition was included in the Persian *Denkard* which was translated into Arabic in the mid 8th century:

For when Alexander conquered the kingdom of Dara [Darius] the King, he had them all translated into the Greek language. Then he burnt the original copies which were kept in the treasure-houses of Dara, and killed

14 Saliba 2007, 30–31.

15 Persepolis.

16 Abu Sahl, quoted in Ibn al-Nadim, *The Fihrist*, Chapter 7, The First Section, trans. Dodge 1970, 574.

everyone whom he thought might be keeping away any of them. Except that some books were saved through the protection of those who safeguarded them. And he who could escaped from Alexander by running away to the islands of the seas and the mountain tops. Then when they returned to their homes after the death of Alexander they put into writing those parts that they had memorized. What they wrote down from memory was fragmentary. Much of it had passed away and little had remained.¹⁷

These claims would have been assisted by the ongoing familiarity with scientific texts among the Persian bureaucrats who assisted the Abbasid translation movement.¹⁸ This relationship between the Persian tradition and the Abbasid caliphate was a result of the influence of Persian families, like that of the Barmakids, in the Abbasid court.¹⁹ Al-Mansur identified the Abbasid dynasty as not merely the descendants of the Prophet, but also the successors of the ancient imperial dynasties of Iraq and Iran,²⁰ and therefore the claim that the Hellenic sciences were originally Persian supported the claim that they belonged to Abbasid society.

In addition to claiming that the Hellenic sciences were originally eastern in origin and that the Byzantines were not the true descendents of the Hellenes, the perception that the importance of these sciences to the Abbasid court was directly responsible for their survival was described as a hallmark of al-Mamun's reign by later Arabic writers. In the 11th century, Ibn Ridwan stated:

Al-Mamun revived [the teaching of medicine] by favouring the most excellent of men. But for that, all the sciences of the ancients, including medicine, logic, and philosophy, would have been forgotten <just as they are forgotten> today in the lands in which they were most specifically cultivated, I mean Rome, Athens, the Byzantine provinces, and many other lands.²¹

17 Zoroaster, *The Book of Nativities*, translated into Arabic by Mahankard (*Kitab al-Mawalid*), Book 4 paragraph 2, trans. Afnan 1964 in Gutas 1998, 37–38. For a full discussion of the story in most extant forms see Gutas 1998, 35–40.

18 Saliba 2007, 58–72. He argues that a similar familiarity existed among the Syriac Christians, including Hunayn ibn Ishaq, who either corrected Istafan's translation of *De Materia Medica* or co-authored it, and made a Syriac translation of the work.

19 Kennedy 2004, 132–133.

20 Gutas 1998, 29.

21 Ibn Ridwan, *Al-Kitab an-nafi fi kayfiyyat ta'lim sina at at-tibb*, trans. Gutas 1998, 93.

Being a medical writer, he highlighted the importance of medicine, but he contextualised it within the broader Hellenic sciences.²² In addition to this description, Ibn Ridwan made an allusion to the *topos* of forgotten knowledge in the West, especially in Byzantine controlled territories. A similar literary device was used by Ibn al-Nadim in *The Index* written in AD 987:

I heard Abū Ishāq ibn Shahrām tell in a general gathering that there is in the Byzantine country a temple of ancient construction. It has a portal larger than any other ever seen with both gates made of iron. In ancient times, when they worshipped heavenly bodies and idols, the Greeks exalted this [temple], praying and sacrificing in it. He [Ibn Shahrām] said, 'I asked the emperor of the Byzantines to open it for me, but this was impossible, as it had been locked since the time that the Byzantines had become Christians. I continued, however, to be courteous to him, to correspond with him, and also to entreat him in conversation during my stay at his court.' ... 'He agreed to open it and, behold, this building was made of marble and great colored stones, upon which there were many beautiful inscriptions and sculptures. I have never seen or heard of anything equalling its vastness and beauty. In this temple there were numerous camel loads of ancient books.' He exaggerated to the extent of a thousand camel [loads]. 'Some of these [books] were worn and some in normal condition. Others were eaten by insects.' ... He went on to say, 'After my exit the door was locked, causing me to feel embarrassed because of the favor shown me.'²³

While this anecdote did not discuss medical texts, it was quoted in Ibn Abu Usaiba's *History of Physicians*, proving that it was considered relevant in Arabic medical studies in this period.²⁴

A similar anecdote was used by Abdullah Ibn-abi-Zayd (AD 922–998),²⁵ a prolific North African writer on Islamic law, in support of the previous Umayyad caliphate. Unlike Ibn al-Nadim, he placed it in the 8th century to attack the Abbasid caliphate:

22 For further information on Ibn Ridwan, see Iskandar 1976, 239–256.

23 Ibn al-Nadim, *The Fihrist*, Chapter 7, The First Section, trans. Dodge 1970, 585–586.

24 Ibn Abu Usaiba, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 8 'Abu Zayd Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-'Abadi', 358–359.

25 Gutas 1998, 156 gives these dates. Note that Sezgin 1967, 478 states he died in AD 996.

The first current which they introduced was to export in Islamic lands the books of the Greeks which were then translated into Arabic and circulated widely among the Muslims. The reason of their being exported from the land of the Byzantines into Islamic territories was Yahya ibn-Halid ibn-Barmak.²⁶

Gutas paraphrases Ibn-abi-Zayd's claim that the Byzantine emperor gathered books and hid them in a secret building to prevent heresy among potential readers, but when Yahya, a prominent Barmakid Persian in the Abbasid court,²⁷ heard of the repository he asked if he could borrow the texts. The emperor agreed on the condition that they were never returned. Ibn-abi-Zayd then stated that the emperor said, "The Muslims will be afflicted with these books and we shall be rid of their evil."²⁸ The similarity in these two tales suggests that hidden troves of Greek texts constituted an anecdotal *topos* prevalent in Arabic literature which could be used to attack enemies, be they a rival nation or a different caliphate.²⁹ Gutas describes Ibn-abi-Zayd's work as an apology for the fallen Umayyad dynasty, of which al-Rahman III was a descendant, and suggests that his attack on the Hellenic sciences was the result of their association with the Abbasid dynasty,³⁰ and therefore should be considered a rhetorical device.³¹ Owing to its rhetorical nature, this fragment alone cannot illustrate a significant difference in attitude towards the Hellenic sciences between the contemporary scholarship in northern Africa and the Andalusian court of al-Rahman III; this rhetoric was directed against the Abbasid caliphate and its Persian bureaucracy, using their alleged antipathy towards the Hellenic sciences to attack both. Like the court of the Abbasids, Al-Rahman's

26 Ibn-abi-Zayd translated and quoted by Gutas 1998, 156.

27 Kennedy 2004, 139–140.

28 Ibn-abi-Zayd quoted and translated by Gutas 1998, 157.

29 The search for knowledge which could be described as forgotten, hidden or lost was a popular *topos* when referring to the Hellenic sciences, both in the Arabic and Greek sources. See below for Greek examples.

30 Gutas 1998, 156–157.

31 This anecdote had considerable longevity within Arabic rhetoric. It appears to have survived only because it suited the needs of the seventeenth-century Egyptian scholar Jalāl as-Suyuti. Gutas 1998, 156–157 does not name the source of this fragment quoted by as-Suyuti. According to El-Rougyheb 2015, 36, as-Suyuti, although "notorious for his hostility to philosophy and logic, prided himself in knowing grammar, rhetoric, and jurisprudence 'according to the principles of the Arabs and the erudite, not according to the way of the Persian and philosophers.'" This anecdote agreed with his approach to scholarship perfectly, and might have also served to illustrate his rhetorical knowledge.

court was renowned for including scholars, poets, and especially physicians,³² and he would have appreciated Romanos II's gift. Illustrated volumes of Dioscorides were highly prized in the Arab world,³³ medicine being one of the highest sciences,³⁴ and Dioscorides, along with Galen, formed the basis for all subsequent developments in Arabic pharmacology.³⁵ The elevated position of physicians at Cordoba and the ongoing animosity directed at the Abbasids, as illustrated by Ibn-abi-Zayd, suggests that the opportunity to improve upon an Abbasid translation of a scientific text would have had strong appeal. This copy of *De Materia Medica* might have been a different recension to that translated in Baghdad³⁶ or a more complete manuscript; in either case it would have been highly prized.³⁷ Upon receipt of this gift, al-Rahman not only admitted that Byzantium was superior to his court with regard to pharmacology, but also implied that the pre-existing Abbasid translation of Dioscorides was inferior. By providing this book and the means to translate it, Romanos II made a powerful statement about the relationship between the Byzantine court and the Hellenic sciences: a statement of ownership.

This gift of Dioscorides was but one example of the Byzantine efforts in the 10th century to reclaim the cultural ownership of the Hellenic sciences from both the Abbasids and their own past. In addition to the Abbasid court's claims

32 Hourani 1970, 148–152; Makki 1992, 36–38.

33 Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 4, 'Dioscorides', trans. Kopf 1971, 70: "Dioscorides of Anazarba, the man pure of soul, who brought great benefit to the people, the Arabized, the victorious, who toured the land, adopted the science of simple drugs from deserts, islands and seas; who described them, experimented with them and detailed their uses before being questioned about their effect, so that when experiments succeeded and he found that when put to the test they came out with the same results, he proved that and illustrated them according to the pattern." The inclusion of illustrations was so important that in later Arabic translations of the work that more attention was given to the illustrations than to the text: Saliba & Komaroff 2008, 6–65.

34 Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians*, 'Preface', trans. Kopf 1971, 1: "Now since the medical art is one of the noblest, a most goodly one and its praise is sung in the divine books and in religious treatises, the lore of the body has been set on a par with the lore of religion."

35 Examples of works which developed from Dioscorides include Avicenna's fifth book of the *Canon of Medicine* and ibn Wahshiya's *Book of Poisons*. See Levey 1966, 7–8; Iskander 1976, 236–256; Naser, Tibi, Savage-Smith 2009, 78; Pormann 2011, 493–515; Mavroudi 2012, 22 and 25.

36 Collins 2000, 117.

37 For the importance placed on textual criticism and the use of multiple manuscripts by the translators of Greek medical works, see Hunayn bin Ishaq, quoted in Rosenthal 1975, 20–21.

that the Byzantines were not Hellenes, and that the Hellenic sciences had been rejected in favour of Christianity, within Byzantine culture the word 'Hellenic' (and the sciences associated with it) had become associated with paganism. As early as the 6th century, the *Codex Justinianus* included the pejorative phrase *μισαρώων Ἑλλήνων* which was understood as 'of the loathsome pagans'.³⁸ This legal text should not be seen as a reflection of the *mores* of Byzantine society, because Classical *exempla* continued to be used in literature from this time, but it was a reflection of what Kaldellis describes as a flourishing "hard-line Christian attitude".³⁹ During the iconomachy of the 8th and 9th centuries, an interest in Hellenic sciences became a weapon with which to attack iconoclasts.⁴⁰ John the Grammarian, patriarch of Constantinople (838–843)⁴¹ during the reign of the iconoclast emperor Theophilos (829–842), was accused of Hellenism and paganism associated with magic. In his *Life of the Patriarch Nikephoros I*, Ignatios the Deacon referred to John by the name Iannes, identifying him with an Old Testament Egyptian magician.⁴² He also referred to him using the phrase οἱ ἀπὸ κοιλίας φωνοῦντες γραμματικοί, an indirect form of the Classical Greek term *ἐγγαστρίμυθος* 'ventriloquist', which related to female oracular figures in Classical Greek texts and might be a reference to his interest in the Hellenic sciences.⁴³ In the *Life of Saint Theodora the Empress*, John was called 'new Apollonios', and described as a dish-diviner (*λεκανομαντής*).⁴⁴ Apollonios of Tyana, a first-century neo-Pythagorean, was considered an evil sorcerer in the Christian tradition, and the practice of dish-divining was

38 *Cod. Just.* 1.11.10. Translation based on Cameron 2014, 52 and discussion in 131 n. 15. For further discussion of the law see Watts 2004, 177–182 and Dmitriev 2010, 39–40. See Kaldellis 2007, 173–174, on the need to avoid confusing the people who lived in Greece with pagan 'Hellenes.'

39 Kaldellis 2007, 173–179.

40 Magdalino 2006, 122–135 focuses on the 'occult' sciences in his discussion of these attacks, but it should be noted that differentiation between the 'rational' and 'occult' sciences in antiquity and the Byzantine period imposes modern concepts onto the past: see Mavroudi 2006, 39–50. Kaldellis 2007, 181 suggests that the learned classes in this period devoted more attention to polemical attacks than to reading literature. This might account for the number of attacks against iconoclast scholars.

41 Treadgold 1979, 178.

42 Ignatios (De Boor 1880, 166). For a summary of the numerous authors who called John the Grammarian by this name, see Lemerle 1986, 156–157 n. 115.

43 Ignatios (De Boor 1880, 208): "the grammarians/scholars talking from bellies". See Fisher 1998, 129 n. 456. For the availability at this time of texts which reference ventriloquism see Magdalino and Mavroudi 2006, 30–35.

44 *Life of the Empress Theodora*, 4 (Markopoulos 1983, 260). Compare Theophanes continuatus 4.7 (Bekker 1838, 155).

associated with paganism.⁴⁵ Similar accusations were included in a canon attributed to John the Grammarian's iconodule replacement, Methodios, a canon which was written to celebrate the success of orthodoxy over iconoclasm.⁴⁶ John was described as an ἐγαστρίμυθος who ought to have been named Pythagoras, Chronos or Apollo. Methodios described him as:

Ἴσος γὰρ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐδείχθη ὑψαυχούμενος, τοῖς τούτων συγγράμμασιν, ἃ δικαίως ἐλίχθησαν αἱ τῶν δικαίων φωναί.

The equal of the Hellenes he was shown, boasting of their writings, which the voices of the righteous rightly crushed.⁴⁷

Methodios is not considered an iconodule extremist,⁴⁸ yet John's interest in Hellenic material was strongly criticised and associated with magic and paganism in this work.

A similar accusation of Hellenism was brought against John the Grammarian's kinsman, Leon the Mathematician or Philosopher, who was promoted by Theophilos. Leon taught Hellenic sciences in Constantinople, for which he was attacked posthumously by a former student. Constantine the Sicilian criticised his 'external' or pagan learning, and accused Leon of apostasy, describing his worship of Zeus and the old Hellenic deities.⁴⁹ In an epigram included in the *Palatine Anthology*, Leon referred to himself as a 'so-called Hellene'⁵⁰ in a move described by Kaldellis as an attempt to lessen the stigma attached to the term.⁵¹ While the disparate sources for Leon's life render it impossible to recreate his career with any degree of certainty,⁵² Leon's interest in the Hellenic sciences is reflected in the partial reconstruction of his library, which proves that Leon

45 Vinson 1998, 367–368 n. 46 and 47. See also Magdalino 2006, 133–134.

46 Methodios of Constantinople, *Canon epinicius seu Victorialis in erectione SS. imaginum* (PG 99, 1768–1780).

47 Methodios (PG 99, 1776 B). See Lemerle 1986, 164.

48 Dvornik 1953, 73–74.

49 Constantine the Sicilian, 'Hexameters and Elegiacs on Leo the Philosopher by Constantine his Student' (Matranga 1850, 555–556). For discussion of the relationship between Leo and Constantine see Lauxtermann 2003, 98–107.

50 Kaldellis 2007, 182, translates ἐπονομαζομένου "Ἕλληος thus.

51 Kaldellis 2007, 182. *Anth. Pal.* 15.12: Λέοντος φιλοσόφου εἰς ἑαυτὸν τοῦ ἐπονομαζομένου "Ἕλληος "Leo the Philosopher to himself, named the Hellene". Unfortunately the manuscript used by Paton does not include this title. Westerink 1986, 199 includes this poem with the title *Epigram* 1X, but he interprets this title as "surnamed the Pagan" (196).

52 See below.

owned copies of Ptolemy, Archimedes and Euclid, among other scientific and literary works.⁵³

Even following the 'Triumph of Orthodoxy' in AD 843, scholarly interest in Hellenic sciences continued to be used to attack ideological enemies. Photios, twice the patriarch of Constantinople (858–867 and 877–886), was described by Niketas in his *Life of Saint Ignatios*, patriarch of Constantinople (847–858 and 867–877), thus:

Γραμματικῆς μὲν γὰρ καὶ ποιήσεως, καὶ πάσης ὀλίγου δεῖν ἐπιστήμης τῶν θύραθεν τοσοῦτον αὐτῷ τὸ περιόν, ὥς μὴ μόνον σχεδὸν φάναι τῶν κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ γενεάν πάντων διενεγκεῖν, ἤδη δὲ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς παλαιοὺς αὐτὸν διαμιλλᾶσθαι.... ἀλλ' ἐπὶ σαθρᾷ θεμελίῳ καὶ ἀμμώδει, τῇ κοσμικῇ σοφίᾳ, καὶ τῇ ἀλαζονείᾳ τοῦ μὴ κατὰ Χριστὸν πεπαιδευμένου λόγου τὴν ἑαυτοῦ καρδίαν στηρίξας καὶ τὸν νοῦν ...

... so steeped in grammar and poetry, rhetoric and philosophy, and even medicine, and very nearly all secular learning, that he was thought not only to surpass all men in his own day but also able to rival the ancients ... It is on shifting foundations and on sand, on worldly learning, on the vanity of knowledge not ruled by Christ, that he set his heart and mind.⁵⁴

This sympathetic biography did not use the epithet 'Hellene'; instead Niketas alluded to the Hellenic sciences by referencing philosophy and medicine with ancient secular scholarship, and stated that Photios' interests were not compatible with his religious position. In doing so, Niketas was using similar rhetoric against Photios as had been directed against iconoclasts earlier in the 9th century.⁵⁵ Often used in reference to the study of Hellenic sciences, 'Hellenism' was a very serious accusation in Byzantine society.⁵⁶ In each of these ninth-century examples, not only were John, Leon, and Photios known for studying Hellenic sciences, they each interacted with the Abbasid court: John the

53 Irigion 1962, 293; Browning 1964, 8; Lemerle 1986, 195–198; Kataros 1993, 388–390.

54 Niketas (PG 105. 509B, D; trans. Lemerle 1986, 234–235). It is worth noting that Niketas also associates Photios with magic by accusing his supporter Theodore Santabarenos, the metropolitan of Euchaita, of sorcery: PG 105. 568C–D.

55 Magdalino 2006, 131–132.

56 Cameron 1997, 7 states this in regard to the seventh century, and Kaldellis 2007, 182 points out that the accusation was still serious in the ninth century.

Grammarians⁵⁷ and Photios⁵⁸ had been members of embassies to the Abbasid caliphs, and Leon was invited to the Abbasid court.⁵⁹ At the same time, this Byzantine court actively promoted the disassociation between Byzantines and Hellenes. Given the nature of the rhetoric employed against all three scholars, it is certainly possible that al-Gahiz, al-Kindi and their peers who argued that the Byzantines were not the descendents of the Hellenes were influenced by this Byzantine attitude.

The semiporous nature of the border between the Byzantine empire and the Abbasid caliphate allowed the transfer not only of embassies, but of literature and reports regarding each other's court.⁶⁰ This means that each court was likely well aware of how they were perceived by the other, an awareness which could have influenced policy decisions, rhetoric and ambassadorial choices.⁶¹ So while Arabic sources claimed that there was limited access to ancient Greek texts in Constantinople, this did not reflect the real situation, and was likely just a popular rhetorical claim.⁶² In addition to Leon's library, Photios' *Bibliotheca* provides a snapshot of what was available: 279 texts he had read when his brother was not present, implying that there were more.⁶³ Photios took great pleasure in learning and teaching,⁶⁴ so it seems extremely unlikely that Photios would not have taken note of the scholarship being promoted by the Abbasids during his ambassadorial travels, especially when they correlated with his own interests. Photios included Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica* in his *Bibliotheca*,⁶⁵ and it was translated into Arabic during the 9th century, so it provides an interesting case study for the shared interest in the Hellenic sciences throughout the 9th and 10th centuries.⁶⁶ The first Arabic translation was made

57 Theophanes continuatus 3.9 (Bekker 1838, 95–99), Magdalino 1998, 196–197. Bury 1909, 296–299 provides an overview of the disparate sources for John the Grammarian.

58 Phot. *Bibl.* Preface.

59 Lemerle 1986, 173–177 and Katsaros 1993, 383–398, provide an overview of disparate sources for Leo the Mathematician.

60 El-Cheikh 2004, 2–3.

61 Magdalino 1998, 206.

62 Irigion 1962, 287–302; Mavroudi 2015b, 38–39. El-Cheikh 2004, 3 states that Byzantium “was relatively well known, leaving limited room for fantastic speculation”.

63 Phot. *Bibl.* Preface. For discussion of the manuscript and a translation see Treadgold 1977, 343–349. For a discussion of *Bibliotheca* as indicative of manuscripts available in Constantinople see Lemerle 1986, 35–41.

64 Phot. *Epistles* 1.2 (PG 102. 597B–C).

65 Photios' summary of Dioscorides at §178.

66 Saliba and Komaroff 2008, 8 date this translation to c. AD 860, while Gutas 1998, 182 dates it to AD 800–830. Ibn Juljul states that the translation was made during the reign of

by Istifan ibn Basil (Stephen son of Basil), then corrected and approved by Hunayn ibn Ishaq (or they co-authored it).⁶⁷ Istifan's approach to translating this text, leaving those plants which he could not identify in Greek,⁶⁸ implies there was an expectation that there would be an ongoing interaction between Arabic and Greek scholars.⁶⁹ Such relationships did develop, as illustrated by Nicholas the Monk who was sent to Cordoba by Romanos II because of his knowledge of Greek, Arabic, and pharmacology. Nicholas' understanding of Arabic indicates that Lemerle's argument that scholarship only travelled from the Byzantine empire into Islamic controlled regions is manifestly incorrect, as does the dissemination of the various translations and copies of Dioscorides' work.⁷⁰ It has even been suggested that illustrations in a tenth-century Greek manuscript of *De Materia Medica* (Pierpont Morgan Library, M 652) was influenced by the Transoxian Arabic manuscripts, indicating Arabic scholarship was influencing pharmacological scholarship in the Greek speaking world.⁷¹

The influence of Islamic culture on Byzantium was not limited to scholarship, but can also be seen in the art and architecture in Constantinople, and while eastern influences of this nature do date back to the Saracen period, there appears to have been an increase during the reign of Theophilos.⁷² While iconoclasm was associated with the Hellenic sciences owing to ninth-century rhetoric, it was also associated with Arabic culture during his reign.⁷³ It was then that the Palace of Bryas was built on the Asian side of the Bosphorus

al-Mutawakkil (quoted in Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 13 'Ibn Juljul', trans. Kopf 1971, 633) who ruled AD 847–861.

67 Ibn Juljul quoted in Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians*, Chapter 13 'Ibn Juljul', 633. The colophon of an eleventh-century manuscript (Leiden Or. 289) claimed it was a 'rectification' of the text Dioscorides translated by Hunayn and Istifan. See Sadek 1979, 354.

68 Ibn Juljul quoted in Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *History of Physicians* Chapter 13 'Ibn Juljul', trans. Kopf 1971, 633: "Stephen trusted that he would be succeeded by others who would know the drugs for which he did not know a name and would name them in accordance with the state of knowledge at their time, so that the names would become generally known."

69 See Saliba 2007, 27–72 for a plausible argument that there was an ongoing relationship with the Hellenic sciences in the region conquered by the Islamic civilisation well before the Abbasid translation movement.

70 Lemerle 1986, 26. For broader discussions of this see Gutas 1998, 178; Codoñer 2014, 429–448; Mavroudi 2012, 22–25 directly discusses Dioscorides; and Mavroudi 2015a, 195–342.

71 Sadek 1983, 207. Collins 2000, 61 argues that this manuscript can be dated palaeographically to between c. 927 and c. 985, and the script is of a style associated with deluxe manuscripts of the Byzantine court.

72 See Canepa 2009, 224–225. This continual influence would explain the use of Umayyad design elements in Hagia Sophia during the ninth century: see Sheppard 1965, 238–239.

73 Mavroudi 2015b, 42. See also chapter 8 below.

following Islamic architectural forms described by John the Grammarian after his journey to Baghdad as Theophilos' ambassador,⁷⁴ thus connecting Arabic culture with Hellenism and iconoclasm in Constantinople.⁷⁵ In addition to this, it was also during Theophilos' reign that *automata* akin to those designed by Heron of Alexandria in antiquity were introduced to Constantinople via the Abbasid court, as illustrated by the creation of the 'Throne of Solomon'.⁷⁶ Abbasid interest in Heron's works on engineering date to the 9th century,⁷⁷ so even if the Abbasid court had not then influenced the interest in *automata* in Constantinople, the construction of the throne at this time reflects the interest in the Hellenic sciences during the reign of Theophilos. While a creation of an iconoclast emperor, this throne appears to have been used to fulfil a special purpose during the reigns of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and Romanos II which helps to contextualise the decision to send a copy of Dioscorides to Andalusia. *The Book of Ceremonies* stated that the reception hall of the Magnaura Palace, which featured the 'Throne of Solomon', was used to entertain Islamic embassies,⁷⁸ one of which was the embassy of Abd al-Rahman III, the recipient of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*, in either 946 or 947.⁷⁹ So in the middle of the 10th century, displays of the Hellenic sciences which were previously associated with iconoclasm became central to Byzantine approaches to Islam by illustrating its control of these sciences. The 'Throne of Solomon' and the gift of Dioscorides are two examples of this. In the case of the throne, the use of mechanical contrivances which utilised these sciences dovetailed perfectly with Constantine VII's desire to show "τὴν μὲν βασιλείαν ταύτῃ βασιλικωτέραν καὶ φωβερωτέραν ἀποδεικνύντες".⁸⁰

This focus on the Hellenic sciences in the mid 10th century appears to have been a part of a deliberate policy in response to the Abbasid caliphate, especially in the reigns of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and Romanos II.⁸¹ Throughout the 8th and 9th centuries, Abbasid literary figures employed the 'search for hidden manuscripts' *topos* to claim the Hellenic sciences, but during the reigns of these two emperors the same *topos* was employed to claim

74 Theophanes continuatus 3.9 (Bekker 1838, 98). See Ricci 1998, 131–149 for comparison of literary evidence to the claimed site at Küçükyali.

75 Codoñer 2014, 443–444.

76 Grabar 1957, 170.

77 Brett 1954, 480; Codoñer 2014, 446–448.

78 Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, 2.15, R566 and R570.

79 Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, 2.15, R571.

80 Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *The Book of Ceremonies* (trans. Moffatt and Tall), 2. Preface, R517: "the emperor's power as more imperial and awe-inspiring".

81 Lemerle 1986, 309–346. See also Holmes 2010, 55–80.

the Hellenic sciences for Byzantium. An example of this use is the proem of *Excerpta de Legationibus Romanorum ad Gentes* (which might or might not have been written by Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos):

ὁ τῆς πορφύρας ἀπόγονος Κωνσταντῖνος, ὁ ὀρθοδοξότατος καὶ χριστιανικώτατος τῶν πώποτε βεβασιλευκότων, ὁ ξυμπέστερον πρὸς τὴν τῶν καλῶν κατανόησιν διακείμενος καὶ δραστήριον ἐσχηκὼς νοῦν ἔκρινε βέλτιστον εἶναι καὶ κοινωφελὲς τῷ τε βίῳ ὀνησιφόρον, πρότερον μὲν ζητητικῇ διεγέρσει βίβλους ἄλλοθεν ἄλλας ἐξ ἀπάσης ἐκασταχοῦ οἰκουμένης συλλέξασθαι παντοδαπῆς καὶ μολυειδοῦς ἐπιστήμης ἐγκύμονας ...

This is why Constantine, born of the porphyra, the most orthodox and most Christian of all the emperors who ever reigned, endowed with an acute ability to discern the good and with the intelligence to put it promptly into effect, considered that the best thing to do to be useful to all and to benefit everyone, was first to have an active search made and to gather together from all corners of the inhabited world books of every kind, full of diverse and varied knowledge.⁸²

In addition to the use of the *topos*, this passage addressed the rhetoric employed against John the Grammarian, Leon the Mathematician, and Photios by clearly stating the emperor's Christianity and orthodoxy was in no way diminished by his interest in "varied knowledge". Like the claims of the Abbasids, the use of this *topos* did not necessarily represent reality, as many works were already available in Constantinople; instead it reflected a deliberate move on the part of the emperor to associate Hellenic scholarship with Byzantine orthodoxy in response to Abbasid rhetoric. Similar motivations can be seen in tenth-century accounts of the career of Leon the Mathematician.

Attempted reconstructions of Leon's career have been undermined by anachronisms, errors, and a lack of agreement among various sources,⁸³ but these historiographical issues might be the result of the manipulation of Leon's career to fit *topoi* relating to the study of the Hellenic sciences in the 10th century. Central to the sources which discuss Leon's career is the anecdote

82 (De Boor 1903, 325–361; trans. Lemerle 1986). The proem of *De Virtutibus et Vitiis*, (Büttner-Wobst 1906, 1–2) is almost identical.

83 For a full review of the extant writings of Leon the Mathematician see Westerink 1986, 193–222. For the problems associated with trying to recreate his career historically, see Treadgold 1979, 185–187 and Lemerle 1986, 177. Katsaros 1993, 383–92 goes so far as to label his career akin to a 'myth'.

that one of his students was captured and brought to the court of the Abbasid caliph, al-Mamun, and was so impressive that the caliph issued an invitation for Leon to take a position at court.⁸⁴ Variations of this anecdote are preserved in George the Monk,⁸⁵ Pseudo-Symeon,⁸⁶ Kedrenos,⁸⁷ and Theophanes continuatus.⁸⁸ With the exception of George the Monk, whose brief account might date to the late 9th century, these sources all date to the 10th century or use tenth-century sources, and seem to reflect tenth-century attitudes towards the Hellenic sciences.⁸⁹ For example, Theophanes continuatus' depiction of Leon's career appears to convey the attitudes of his patrons, Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and Romanos II.⁹⁰ While the rhetoric of the 9th century attacked the Hellenic sciences as pagan and iconoclastic (possibly even Arabic), these emperors were promoting Constantinople as the centre for the study of ancient texts. In addition to this, the beneficiary of their patronage, the author of the Theophanes continuatus manipulated Theophilos' attitude towards the Hellenic sciences to rebrand them as Roman, by having the iconoclast refuse to allow Leon to visit Baghdad which would facilitate "... ἐτέροις καλὸν καὶ τὴν τῶν ὄντων γῶσιν ἔκδοτον ποιῆσαι τοῖς ἔθνεσι, δι' ἧς τὸ τῶν Ῥωμαίων γένος θαυμάζεται τε καὶ τιμᾶται παρὰ πᾶσιν, ...".⁹¹ This passage indicates that scholarly interest in the Hellenic sciences was being rehabilitated at this time by describing them as both Roman and Hellenic: as the author described al-Mamun's "... μαθήμασι σχολάζων Ἑλληνικοῖς καὶ δὴ καὶ γεωμετρίας ...".⁹² This rendition of the anecdote appears to have been a response to Abbasid propaganda.⁹³ In addition to this, Theophanes continuatus made use of the same 'active search for texts' *topos*

84 Lemerle 1986, 173–178 provides a review of the sources for this anecdote.

85 George the Monk, *De Theophilo*, 22–23 (Bekker 1838, 805–806).

86 Pseudo-Symeon, *De Theophilo* 18–20 (Bekker 1838, 638–640).

87 Kedrenos, *Historiarum Compendium* (Bekker 1839, 166–171).

88 Theophanes continuatus 4.26–29 (Bekker 1838, 185–192).

89 Kazhdan 1991, 836, 1983, 1118, 2062.

90 Theophanes continuatus' work commenced under the patronage of Constantine VII, and was completed during the reign of Romanos II. See Nickles 1937, 222–223; Kazhdan 1991, 2062.

91 Theophanes continuatus 4.27 (Bekker 1838, 190): "the delivery of the beautiful knowledge of the truth, the reason for the marvel and reverence of the Roman nation which it receives from all, to other foreigners."

92 Theophanes continuatus, 4.27 (Bekker 1938, 186): "devotion to Hellenic sciences, moreover geography."

93 Codoñer 2014, 437 agrees that this passage was a direct response to Arabic propaganda like that of Al-Gahiz quoted above.

included in both ninth-century Arabic texts and the *Excerpta Historica* cited above:

ὥς τὴν μὲν γραμματικὴν καὶ ποιητικὴν κατὰ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν διατρίβων κατῴρθωσεν, ῥητορικὴν δὲ καὶ φιλοσοφίαν καὶ ἀριθμῶν ἀναλήψεις κατὰ τὴν νήσον Ἄνδρον γενόμενος· ἐκείσε γάρ τινι σοφῷ ἀνδρὶ ἐντυχὼν καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς μόνον καὶ τινὰς λόγους παρ' αὐτοῦ λαβὼν, ἐπεὶ μὴ ὅσον ἐβούλετο εὕρισκεν, τῇ χέρσῳ ταύτης περινοστών καὶ μοναστήρια καταλαμβάνων καὶ τὰς ἀποκειμένας βίβλους ἀνερευνῶν τε καὶ ποριζόμενος, καὶ πρὸς τὰς κορυφὰς τῶν ὀρέων σπουδαιότερον ταύτας ἐμμελετῶν, πρὸς τὸ τῆς γνώσεως οὕτως ὕψος ἀνεβιβάζετο, ... τὰ σπέρματα τῶν ἐπιστημῶν ταῖς τῶν βουλομένων διανοίαις καταβαλλόμενος.

So, he learned grammar and poetry, wasting time in Constantinople, then rhetoric, philosophy and arithmetic on the island of Andros. For there, after conversing with a certain wise man, and learning only first principles and some theories from him, when he found that he did not want that sort of thing, then visiting the dry parts of this [island], and coming to the monasteries, and searching out and taking hidden books, and studying these more seriously on the mountain tops, in this way he was brought to the height of knowledge, ... sowing the seeds of scientific knowledge for the understanding of those who are willing.⁹⁴

The author's depiction of the career of Leon the Mathematician illustrates the imperial rehabilitation of the Hellenic sciences and Byzantium's superiority to the Abbasid caliphate, by employing the same literary *topos* as Arabic sources, and claiming that the emperor always had direct control of this knowledge. Just as Theophanes continuatus used the occult sciences to attack those Constantine VII considered 'bad',⁹⁵ he used the career of Leon, a rehabilitated moderate iconoclast, to promote the Byzantine ownership of the Hellenic sciences while directly opposing the Arabic claims of the previous two centuries. This programme of rehabilitation by Constantine VII and Romanos II employed a multitude of media: the use of scientific contrivances such as the 'Throne of Solomon', the literature of the encyclopaedist movement at court, and historical works they patronised. *In toto*, this reflects a complete departure from the rhetoric of the 9th century, and it is in this changed environment that

94 Theophanes continuatus 4.29 (Bekker 1838, 192). For a discussion of the confusing nature of this statement attributed to Leo see Lemerle 1986, 172–173.

95 Magdalino 2006, 122–133.

the decision to send an illustrated copy of *De Materia Medica* to al-Rahman III must be considered.

After two centuries of Abbasid propaganda which claimed that the Hellenic sciences belonged to Arabic society, the court of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and Romanos II implemented a programme which sought to promote Byzantine intellectual superiority over the Abbasid court. They rehabilitated the association of the Hellenic sciences from their previous association with paganism and iconoclasm, using the same rhetoric as was used against Byzantium in the Abbasid literary circles, and they used at least one scientific manuscript, Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*, as a gift not only to illustrate Byzantine ownership of the Hellenic tradition, but to prove that the scientific material from Constantinople was superior to that generated in the Abbasid caliphate. So-called 'diplomacy of the book' had a prominent role within the Byzantine court, and such gifts were carefully chosen.⁹⁶ Romanos II's choice of an illustrated copy of Dioscorides was not ill-considered. Illustrated manuscripts of this type, likely similar in style to earlier illustrated manuscripts, such as the Ancia Juliana (Vindob. Med. Gr. 1) or Naples (Ex-Vindob. Gr. 1) Dioscorides, were extremely expensive to produce in tenth-century Constantinople,⁹⁷ so the gift was obviously an important element in the ambassadorial exchanges.⁹⁸ By sending an illustrated copy of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*, Romanos II invested a significant amount of money, but he ensured that he received as much political capital from this outlay as he could: in lay terms he truly got "bang for his buck".

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96 Codoñer 2014, 431–432. See also Codoñer 1996, 9–43.

97 Collins 2000, 68.

98 Brubaker 2008, 177–195. Compare the gem-studded gold wash basins that John the Grammarian took with him to the Abbasid court, Theophanes continuatus 3.9 (Bekker 1838, 96); Magdalino 1998, 197.

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Nikephoros Phokas as Superhero

John Burke

The emperor Nikephoros Phokas was one of Byzantium's most successful generals but in December 969 he was murdered in his bedroom, with the connivance of his wife Theophano, by a group of conspirators including his nephew and successor, John Tzimiskes (r. 969–976). A famous epigram on Nikephoros has been described as “essentially an appeal to the murdered emperor to rise from the dead and protect the city (Constantinople),”¹ and it has been characterized as a political manifesto implicitly critical of the current emperor, with its composition prompted by a Russian threat to Constantinople either in 970 or in 988–989 during the reign of Theophano's son Basil II (r. 976–1025). Interpretation of the poem has been complicated by its attribution, on stylistic and thematic grounds, to the well-known poet John Geometres. In this chapter I propose an alternative reading of the poem and suggest a very different context for its composition.

The poem has been published at least eight times in the modern era, most recently by Marc Lauxtermann:²

«Ὅς ἀνδράσι πρὶν καὶ τομώτερος ξίφους,
 πάρεργον οὗτος καὶ γυναικὸς καὶ ξίφους.
 Ὅς τῷ κράτει πρὶν γῆς ὅλης εἶχε κράτος,
 ὥσπερ μικρὸς γῆς μικρὸν ᾤκησεν μέρος.
 5 Τὸν πρὶν σεβαστόν, ὥς δοκῶ, καὶ θηρίοις
 ἀνείλεν ἢ σύγκοιτος, ἐν δοκοῦν μέλος.
 Ὅ μὴδὲ νυξὶ μικρὸν ὑπνώττειν θέλων

1 Poppe 1976, 216.

2 Lauxtermann 2003, 308–309. For reasons that will become evident below, I have substituted a full stop for Lauxtermann's upper stops or commas at the end of vv. 2, 4 and 26, and in the middle of v. 9. In v. 14 I have retained the reading of all manuscripts, πᾶν ἔθνος, and in v. 16 I have placed a comma before and after the word σός. I have also capitalized the initial letter of sentences and proper nouns, as more familiar to the modern eye, and included quotation marks to indicate change of speaker. For the earlier editions see Ševčenko 1969, 189 n. 11, and Thurn 1973, 282–283. Some manuscripts not hitherto taken into consideration are mentioned in Burke 2014, 387–398.

- ἐν τῷ τάφῳ νῦν μακρὸν ὑπνώττει χρόνον.
 Θέαμα πικρὸν.» «Ἄλλ' ἀνάστα νῦν, ἄναξ,
 10 καὶ τάττε πεζοὺς, ἵπποτας, τοξοκράτας,
 τὸ σὸν στράτευμα, τὰς φάλαγγας, τοὺς λόχους.
 Ὅρμα καθ' ἡμῶν Ῥωσικὴ πανοπλία·
 Σκυθῶν ἔθνη σφύζουσιν εἰς φονουργίαν·
 ληλατοῦσι πᾶν ἔθνος τὴν σὴν πόλιν,
 15 οὓς ἐπτόει πρὶν καὶ γεγραμμένος τύπος
 πρὸ τῶν πυλῶν, σός, ἐν πόλει Βυζαντίου.
 Ναί, μὴ παρόψει ταῦτα· ῥίψον τὸν λίθον
 τὸν σε κρατοῦντα, καὶ λίθοις τὰ θηρία
 τὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν δίωκε· δὸς δὲ καὶ πέτρας,
 20 στηριγμὸν ἡμῖν, ἀρραγεστάτην βᾶσιν.
 Εἰ δ' οὐ προκύψαι τοῦ τάφου μικρὸν θέλεις,
 καὶν ῥῆξον ἐκ γῆς ἔθνεσι φωνὴν μόνον·
 ἴσως σκορπίσει ταῦτα καὶ τρέψει μόνη.
 Εἰ δ' οὐδὲ τοῦτο, τῷ τάφῳ τῷ σῷ δέχου
 25 σύμπαντας ἡμᾶς· καὶ νεκρὸς γὰρ ἀρκέσεις
 σῶζειν τὰ πλήθη τῶν ὅλων χριστωνύμων.»
 «ὦ πλὴν γυναικὸς, τ' ἄλλα δ' αὖ νικηφόρος.»

I offer the following translation:

- “Who before to men was even sharper than a sword,
 victim he of both a woman and a sword.
 Who before by might held power over the whole earth,
 like a nobody occupies a small patch of earth.
 5 Before, even savages, I believe, respected his imperial majesty;
 she slew him, who shared his bed, pretending to be one flesh.
 Who wished not to sleep even a little, even at night,
 sleeps now, in the grave, a long sleep.
 Bitter sight!” “But rise now, lord,
 10 and marshal infantry, cavalry, archers,
 your army, your phalanxes, your squadrons;
 Russian armour is surging toward us,
 nations of Scythians are throbbing for murder,
 every nation is raiding around your city,
 15 whom previously a mere graven image would intimidate
 before the gates, your image, in the city of Byzantium.
 No, be not disdainful. Cast off the stone

- that holds you and with stones drive away
 the nations of savages. And also give rocks,
 20 a support for us, a most unbreakable foundation.
 But if you wish not to peep a little from your tomb,
 at least burst forth a cry from the earth to the nations,
 perhaps on its own it will scatter and rout them.
 But if not even this, in your tomb accept
 25 us all, for even dead you are capable
 of saving the entire Christian people.”
 “O, except for a woman, in all else indeed victorious.”³

The poem falls into two parts. The first has four couplets and a half-verse coda. The second part also has a quadripartite structure, though its components are of unequal length. The last verse of the poem is a coda to the poem as a whole. Two personae utter the words of the poem. The first persona speaks in the first person singular and talks about Nikephoros in the third person, whereas the second persona is a group of people speaking in the first person plural while addressing Nikephoros in the second person singular.⁴

The first part of the poem comprises four couplets, each of which presents an ironic contrast between a *before* and a *now*. Word repetition knits the contrasts tightly. In turn the emperor’s prowess, power, prestige and asceticism are cut down. It is as though his death is being re-enacted over and over, viewed each time from a different angle. At the end he is firmly in his grave. The diction is measured—the verses are all end-stopped, and each couplet is complete in itself. The rhythm is also measured but slows progressively within each couplet and from the first couplet to the last. We imagine this person standing respectfully beside the tomb, reflecting on the emperor’s qualities and the tragedy of his fate. The concluding exclamation—‘a bitter sight’—rings sincere.

The second part of the poem, starting in the middle of verse 9, introduces a dramatic change. The tomb seems now to be surrounded by a group of people in a state of alarm. They address the emperor directly, but the focus is not on the emperor so much as on their own salvation. Tragic irony gives way to melodrama, realism to fantasy, a steady attitude to rapid emotional fluctuation. The people ask four things of the deceased emperor:

3 For other English translations see Lauxtermann 2003, 233–234, and Wortley 2010, 270.

4 Cresci 1995, 37–40, gives an excellent analysis of the poem, to which my own is obviously indebted, but she overlooks the crucial distinction between the distinct voices in the poem.

1. rise from your tomb and marshal your armed forces;
2. hurl rocks to chase the savages away, and give us stones for defence;
3. let out a roar to frighten the nations away or, failing that,
4. receive us all in your tomb.

At the end of the second part the emperor is again firmly in his tomb. The people's agitation is reflected by syntactical/semantic units that start mid-verse (vv. 9, 17, 19), intense assonance (vv. 9–12), use of enjambment (vv. 15, 18, 24, 25),⁵ some confused syntax (vv. 14–15: *λεηλατοῦσι πᾶν ἔθνος ... οὗς*), unexpected word order (the line-stopping position of *σός* in v. 16), and apparent confusion about where the “graven image” is/was located—before the gates or inside the City? What starts in v. 10 as a busy but orderly military alert collapses in v. 11 into a confused sequence, with the catch-all expression *τὸ σὸν στράτευμα* preceded by three components of it and followed by another two,⁶ as though the speakers were now extemporizing; the sentence then digresses into nostalgia and regret that the emperor's image has lost its apotropaic power. Commands yield progressively to resigned begging, a mixture of confidence and despair.⁷ The final verse, which returns to the measured diction and ironic thought-pattern of the first persona, is like a pair of scales, with a woman on one side counterbalancing all of Nikephoros' acknowledged achievements.

Before analysing the poem further, it is necessary to consider certain questions related to the poem's composition.

Leo the Deacon reports that Nikephoros was buried hastily in one of the imperial sarcophagi in the Heroon of Constantine attached to the church of the Holy Apostles: *κατὰ τὸ ἡρώον, ἔνθα τὸ τοῦ θείου καὶ ἀοιδίμου Κωνσταντίνου σῶμα κατὰκειται, ἐν μιᾷ τῶν βασιλικῶν σορῶν ἐκήδευσαν*.⁸ Was the poem inscribed on the tomb? Its first publisher, Hase, wondered whether it might be an intellectual exercise,⁹ but to Preger it was beyond doubt a genuine inscription.¹⁰ The only real evidence is the introduction to the poem in our earliest independent manuscript witnesses, of which the first two date to the 12th century:¹¹

- 5 Enjambment was to be avoided in the Byzantine dodecasyllable: Christensen 2011, 343.
- 6 In their translations both Lauxtermann 2003, 233, and Wortley 2010, 270, position the catch-all phrase at the end of the list.
- 7 Cresci 1995, 37: “insieme disperato e fiducioso”.
- 8 Hase 1828, 91.11–13.
- 9 Hase 1828, 453: “ludus potius ingenii quam vera arcae inscriptio”.
- 10 Preger 1891, 24: “Facta est haec genuina sine dubio inscriptio brevissime post mortem Nicephori II Phocae († 969)”. Cresci 1995, 37, does not question this assertion.
- 11 For certain sixteenth-century manuscripts, in each of which the text of the poem derives from one of the four primary manuscripts cited here but the introduction to the poem

1. ἐν δὲ τῇ σορῷ αὐτοῦ ὁ Μελιτινῆς μητροπολίτης Ἰωάννης ταῦτα ἐπέγραψε¹²
2. Ἐπιτύμβια εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Νικηφόρον¹³
3. εἰς τὸν βασιλέα κυρὸν Νικηφόρον τὸν Φωκᾶν¹⁴
4. <Τ>οῦ Μελιτινῆς μητροπολίτου ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸν τάφον τοῦ βασιλέως Νικηφόρου τοῦ Φωκᾶ¹⁵

The preposition εἰς is used both for an inscription on an object but more often for a text about an object.¹⁶ The third introduction does not mention a tomb, and the others do not use the unambiguous word for an inscription, ἐπιγραφή. The first introduction comes closest to suggesting that the poem was an inscription. But of course it cannot be taken literally for it is impossible to imagine a metropolitan working with a hammer and chisel on an imperial tomb. It is also clearly not a title as such but a title converted into narrative prose, with the word σορός likely due to Leo the Deacon's use of it in his account of the burial of Nikephoros, which immediately precedes this introduction in the relevant manuscripts. The tomb is the central locus of the poem, so the original title may well have included the expression εἰς τὸν τάφον. Lauxtermann, in a survey of imperial epitaphs, has pointed out that none are known to have existed in the Heroon of Constantine.¹⁷ In his *History*, which ends with the year 1079, Attaleiates appears to quote the poem at the end of his account

incorrectly locates Nikephoros' tomb in the Peribleptos church, see Burke 2014, 390–1 and (independently) Osti 2011, 241–242.

- 12 In the margin of a now lost Skylitzes manuscript the poem was preceded by two passages found verbatim but widely separated in Leo the Deacon's *History* (Hase 1828, 91.8–13 and 48.10–20). The full *marginalium* was incorporated into Skylitzes' text in two twelfth-century *apographa*, Vind. Hist. gr. 35, fol. 106r, and Paris. Coisl. 136, fol. 101v, with the result that many believed Skylitzes himself to have written the introduction to the poem. For the relationship between these and other Skylitzes' manuscripts see Thurn 1973, xx–xxii and 281–283. The Paris manuscript's 'cousin', the 14th-century Escorialis T.III.9 (169), has the passages from Leo the Deacon in its margin, but not the poem. These latter two manuscripts are also our only sources of the *History* of Michael Attaleiates; for the relationship between them see Tsolakīs 2011, LVII–LXXI.
- 13 Matr. Vitr. 26–2 (s. XII), fol. 157r.
- 14 Marc. gr. XI 22 (coll. 1235) (s. XIV), fol. 87v, on which see Lauxtermann 2003, 310–312.
- 15 Marc. gr. Z 509 (coll. 845) (s. XV), fol. 95r, a Bessarion manuscript.
- 16 See Van Opstall 2008b, 56 and n. 9.
- 17 Lauxtermann 2003, 233: "... it would be the only instance known to us of an epitaph in the Holy Apostles."

of Nikephoros Phokas, but without hinting that it was inscribed on the emperor's tomb.¹⁸

A related question is whether the poem could have been made public while Tzimiskes or Basil II reigned. Scheidweiler believed not,¹⁹ and Mango thought it unlikely to have been carved on the stone because it is highly unfavourable to Theophano.²⁰ Developing these points, Lauxtermann has argued that Tzimiskes would not have permitted a permanent reminder of his crime and the sons of Theophano would not have allowed "a text which informed the rest of the world that their mother was the equivalent of an evil monster".²¹ Magdalino has queried whether any regrets for deceased emperors, with their implicit disapproval of the current emperor, could have been 'published', though he allows that they did circulate under the radar.²² Yet quite a few poems of John Geometres, and the *History* of Leo the Deacon, are not less explicit with respect to the involvement of Theophano (and Tzimiskes) in the murder of Nikephoros.²³ It would be easy to make a case that there was more outspokenness in Byzantium than these scholars allow.²⁴ Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that our poem could have been sanctioned officially as a public inscription on the emperor's tomb.

It has been assumed that the poem was composed when Constantinople was, in accordance with vv. 12–14, under a Russian and Scythian threat and every nation was plundering the City. The year 970 is the first date proposed or adopted by Preger,²⁵ Vasil'evskij,²⁶ Mercati,²⁷ and Mango.²⁸ In 966 Nikephoros had torn up the treaty with Bulgaria and refused to pay the usual tribute. But instead of invading Bulgaria himself, he paid the Rus leader Svjatoslav to do it. The Rus soon became an even greater threat. By autumn 969 they had taken Philippopolis. Nikephoros prepared for the defence of Constantinople and

18 Tsolakis 2011, 176.26–27: Ἀλλ' οὗτος μὲν πάρεργον γενόμενος γυναικὸς καὶ τοῦ ἰδίου ἀνειψίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζιμισκῆ.

19 Scheidweiler 1952, 307–309 and 309 n. 4.

20 Mango 1992, 473–474 n. 5.

21 Lauxtermann 2003, 232–233.

22 Magdalino 2012, 33.

23 See, for example, Cramer 1841, 267–268, 290, 305.24–306.2, and Hase 1828, 50–53.

24 Kaldellis 2015, 146–148, has assembled some evidence. Skylitzes has a veteran ironically rebuke Nikephoros Phokas to his face (Thurn 1973, 278.68–76).

25 Preger 1891, 24.

26 For Vasil'evskij's dating see Poppe 1976, 215 n. 66.

27 Mercati 1921, 158.

28 Mango 1992, 473–474 n. 5.

patched things up with the Bulgarians.²⁹ After he was murdered in December of that year, his successor John Tzimiskes sued for peace, only to be told to get out of Europe and to expect the Rus outside the walls of Constantinople.³⁰ Mango characterised the poem as a political manifesto, construing praise for the previous emperor as a vote of no confidence in the current emperor. Tzimiskes halted the Rus in spring 970.

The second date, proposed by Poppe³¹ and supported vigorously by Lauxtermann,³² is the year 988/989. The situation then was indeed desperate. In about 985 Basil II seems to have decided to bypass his experienced civil and military advisers and take over the reins of government personally. His invasion of Bulgaria in 986 ended in disaster, and by 988 Tsar Samuel had overrun nearly the whole of the West, as far as the Peloponnese, while the entire East was supporting the rebels Bardas Phokas and Bardas Skleros. In a controversial move, Basil entered into an alliance with the Kievan Rus, married his sister Anna to their ruler Vladimir the Great, received 6000 Russian troops as a personal bodyguard—the Varangian Guard—and the rest is history. In this context, Lauxtermann views the poem as a piece of political propaganda opposed to Basil's alliance with the Rus and indirectly canvassing support for Nikephoros' nephew Bardas Phokas. We shall return below to the political import of the poem and the events that occasioned its composition.

Manuscripts that name the poet identify him as John, Metropolitan of Melitene. Described as a 'shady figure',³³ no other works are attributed to him. Although records for the see of Melitene are defective, three Metropolitan Johns of Melitene have been identified, of whom only the first lived clearly before our first witness to the poem.³⁴ He attended synods in Constantinople in 1027 and 1028 and counter-signed ecclesiastical documents up until 1039.³⁵ Psellos wrote a monody—a school exercise—on a John, "most learned

29 Hase 1828, 78.19–80.5.

30 Hase 1828, 105.1–107.6.

31 Poppe 1976, 216–221.

32 Lauxtermann 2003, 233–236.

33 Bernard 2014, 17.

34 Fedalto 1988, 39–40. The second John of Melitene has been identified in a document dated 1193, the third in 1247.

35 Gautier 1978, 84–86.

Metropolitan of Melitene",³⁶ which has been dated tentatively to about 1045.³⁷ If, for the sake of the argument, we suppose that John was twenty years old when he wrote the poem, that he wrote it in 970 and that he died in 1045, he would have been ninety-five when he died; if he wrote the poem in 988, aged twenty, he would have been seventy-seven when he died. Psellos most admired John for continuing to learn and defend the faith vigorously beyond retirement and into advanced old age,³⁸ so both dates are not totally beyond the realm of possibility. It must be said, however, that it would be surprising if the poet were a mere twenty years old at the time of the poem's composition. A later date for the composition of the poem would be a better fit with the little we know about John, Metropolitan of Melitene.

In 1876, however, Vasil'evskij identified John of Melitene with the well-known court poet and soldier John Geometres, who seems to have died around the year 1000.³⁹ Vasil'evskij's study, which Mercati described as "an acute and brilliant historical-literary analysis",⁴⁰ has not been available to me, but Hörandner indicated that Vasil'evskij based his identification on numerous parallels between our poem and the poetry of Geometres,⁴¹ and it is easy to find such parallels. It is important to note that Geometres had no inhibitions about repeating himself, as when in two poems he has Nikephoros listing some of the military victories he could claim as monuments to his memory:

Ταρσὸν ἀμαιομακέτην εἶλον ὑπὸ ζύγιον·
νήσους δ' ἐξεκάθηρα καὶ ἤλασα βάρβαρον αἰχμήν,
εὐμεγέθη Κρήτην, Κύπρον ἀριπρεπέα,⁴²

εὐγενέτιν Κρήτην, Κύπρον ἀριπρεπέα,
Ταρσὸν ἀμαιομακέτην ...⁴³

36 For the text see Gautier 1978, 98–104; the name John is found in line 37, while at lines 130–146 Psellos highlights John's refutation of the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches and his conversion of their contemporary proponents, i.e., the Jacobites, who were very active in Melitene.

37 Sideras 1994, 111–114. Gautier 1978, 84–86, thought it probable that John did not die before the middle of the century.

38 Gautier 1978, 104 lines 157–166.

39 On Geometres' life and works see Van Opstall 2008a, 4–19.

40 Mercati 1921, 159: "acuta e geniale analisi storico-letteraria".

41 Hörandner 1970, 110: "eine Identifizierung, die durch zahlreiche Parallelen im Wortlaut und in der Tendenz belegbar und daher allgemein angenommen ist."

42 Van Opstall 2008a, 210.4–6 ("I brought impregnable Tarsus under the yoke; and I cleansed islands and drove out the barbarian spear, great Crete, distinguished Cyprus").

43 Van Opstall 2008a, 282.6–7 ("noble Crete, distinguished Cyprus, impregnable Tarsus").

Mercati cross-referenced v. 2 of our poem, *πάρεργον οὗτος καὶ γυναικὸς καὶ ξίφους*, with a Geometres reference to a deceased husband, *ἔργον μαχαίρας εἶδεν αὐτὸν καὶ ξίφους*,⁴⁴ but the context in which this slender verbal similarity occurs in each poem makes any connection implausible. On the other hand, parallelisms like those in the four couplets at the start of our poem are frequent in Geometres. For example,

Ἄνω κομίτης ἔφλεγε τὸν αἰθέρα,
κάτω κομήτης πυρπολεῖ τὴν ἐσπέραν.⁴⁵

In a fictional first-person epitaph, Geometres has Nikephoros present himself as victim of a woman despite the wall he had built around the palace because, as Leo the Deacon reports, he was frightened by a prophecy that he would be killed by compatriots inside the palace:⁴⁶

πίπτω δ' ἐν βασιλείοις μέσσοις, οὐδὲ γυναικὸς
χείρας ὑπεξέφυγον ἅ τάλας ἀδρανίης.
ἦν πόλις, ἦν στρατὸς, ἦν καὶ διπλὸν ἔνδοθι τεῖχος,
ἀλλ' ἔτεδὸν μερόπων οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον.⁴⁷

The epithet *σεβαστός* (= *augustus*) is reserved for emperors and thus v. 5 of our poem can be construed as implicitly identifying Nikephoros with the lion that is king of the animal kingdom. Simeon Metaphrastes wrote in a letter that, like the lion, an emperor can scare away even the most savage beasts with a single, regal roar.⁴⁸ Verses 19–23 of our poem, involving a brief *prokypsis* from the tomb and a loud roar, have close verbal similarities with Geometres' invocation to Nikephoros in the face of a Bulgarian threat:

44 Mercati 1921, 160 n. 2, with reference to Cramer 1841, 270.16, untitled ("She saw him the victim of a knife and a sword").

45 Cramer 1841, 283.16–17 ("Above a comet was inflaming the ether, below a count sets fire to the west"); for more parallelisms see Hörandner 1970, 113–114.

46 Hase 1828, 64.13–21.

47 Opstall 2008a, 210.9–12 ("But I fall inside the palace, and did not elude a woman's hands. Oh poor me, my slackness. There was a city, an army, even a second, inner wall. But verily nothing is feebler than men").

48 Simeon Metaphrastes, *Ep.* 79.12–13, cited in Van Opstall 2008a, 306: ἐπεὶ καὶ λέοντος ὁρμὴ τὰ ιταμώτερα τῶν θηρίων σοβεῖ βασιλικῶ καὶ μόνῳ βρυξήματι.

Ποῦ βρυχήματα κράτους
 τοῦ σοῦ, στρατηγέ, τῆς ἀνικῆτου Ῥώμης;
 Φύσει βασιλεῦ, πράγμασι νικηφόρε,
 μικρὸν προκύψας τοῦ τάφου, βρύξον,λέον, ...⁴⁹

As in the last verse of our poem, Geometres here and elsewhere puns on the name Nikephoros.⁵⁰

Geometres wrote several poems in ardent praise of the emperor Nikephoros. His military career seems to have ended around the time that Basil II took personal control, and some poems express deep dismay at Basil's defeat in Bulgaria in 986 and alarm at his alliance with the Rus.⁵¹ It is not surprising that our poem has been interpreted in the light of Geometres' career and concerns.

Vasil'evskij's identification of John of Melitene with John Geometres was accepted by (among others) Mercati,⁵² Scheidweiler,⁵³ Hörandner,⁵⁴ Cresci,⁵⁵ and Osti.⁵⁶ But Darrouzès thought that a few stylistic similarities did not amount to proof of identity,⁵⁷ and Ševčenko was not fully convinced.⁵⁸ Lauxtermann has rejected the identification on the solid ground that there is no evidence of Geometres ever being a bishop,⁵⁹ and Magdalino has questioned whether he was even a monk.⁶⁰ Furthermore, our poem is not associated in any manuscript with a collection of Geometres' poems.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the parallels with Geometres are obvious and cannot be swept under the carpet as imitations or simply "characteristic of late tenth-century poetry in general".⁶² The latter

49 Cramer 1841, 283.21–24 ("Where are the roars of power, yours, general, and invincible Rome's? Emperor by nature, in deeds victorious, peep a little from the tomb, lion, and roar ...").

50 Cramer 1841, 267.3.

51 Magdalino 2012, 25.

52 Mercati 1921, 159.

53 Scheidweiler 1952, 307.

54 Hörandner 1970, 110.

55 Cresci 1995, 37.

56 Osti 2011, 242.

57 Darrouzès 1960, 120–121.

58 Ševčenko 1969, 189.

59 Lauxtermann 1998a, 366–367.

60 Magdalino 2012, 35–36, where he promises to elucidate this matter further.

61 For a detailed description of the main Geometres collections, Paris. suppl. gr. 352 (olim Vat. gr. 997) and Vat. gr. 743 (olim Vat. gr. 1009), see Van Opstall 2008a, 99–114. Codex Paris. gr. 1630 is a part copy of Paris. suppl. gr. 352; see Lauxtermann 2003, 290–293. For other manuscripts with works by Geometres see De Groote 2007.

62 Lauxtermann 2003, 305.

explanation remains undocumented, and the former requires evaluation: is imitation of Geometres mere flattery, or is our poet making some point by referencing Geometres? But when looking for parallels, why stop with Geometres? Both Psellos⁶³ and Attaleiates⁶⁴ noted that much prose and poetry had been written about Nikephoros Phokas during his lifetime and afterwards, and we can find quite striking parallels in at least three works that have survived.

The first is Theodosius the Deacon's *De Creta capta*, which celebrates Nikephoros' conquest of Crete in 961. Dedicated to Nikephoros before he came to the throne, it had to pay due deference to the reigning emperor, Romanos II, but the achievements mentioned are his only by proxy. Towards the end the narrator in the poem turns to Romanos' father, Constantine VII, and wishes that he could peep from the tomb:

Εἶθε προκύψαις τοῦ τάφου, Κωνσταντίνε,
εἶθε σκοπήσῃς, ὥς ἔχει τὰ Συρίας·
ἔγνωσ ἂν υἱόν, ὥς Φίλιππος ἵππότην,
καὶ τοῦτον εἶπες· «ὦ τέκνον, ζήτει κράτος·
οὐκ ἀρκετόν σοι γῆς ὅλης καὶ γὰρ κράτος.»⁶⁵

The last phrase is echoed in verse 3 of our poem (ὅς τῳ κράτει πρὶν γῆς ὅλης εἶχε κράτος). In a rather indirect way, it likens Nikephoros' achievements to those of Alexander the Great.

Theodosius applies the word ἄναξ to Nikephoros no fewer than ten times,⁶⁶ and that is the title with which the dead emperor is addressed in our poem. Theodosius is fond of military lists such as we find in vv. 10–11 of our poem. One example is:

οὕτω στρατάρχας ἄνδρας, εὐθείς ἵππότας,
φαλαγγοσώστας, πεζοτοξο<το>κράτας⁶⁷

63 Aerts 1990, 98.82–85: Ὑπὲρ τοῦ βασιλέως Νικηφόρου τοῦ Φωκά πολλοὶ τῶν κατ' ἐκείνον καὶ τῶν [οὐ] μετ' οὐ πολὺ ὕστερον διεξοδικὰ συγγράμματα ἐκδεδῶκασιν καὶ ὁ γινώσκων ἐκεῖνα εἴσεται ὅποσα ὁ ἀνὴρ οὗτος ἐν τε ἰδιώτου σχήματι ἐν τε βασιλείᾳ κατῴρθωκεν.

64 Tzolakis 2011, 176.17–19: Τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν αὐτοῦ προτερημάτων ποιείσθαι κατάλογον περιττὸν πάντως τῇ παρούσῃ γραφῇ· πλήρης γὰρ τούτων πᾶσα γραφή τε καὶ ποίησις.

65 Criscuolo 1979, vv. 997–1001 ("Would that you could peep from the tomb, Constantine, / would that you could survey how things are in Syria. Like Philipp you would know that your son is a knight / and you would say this: 'O son, seek power; / for power over the whole earth is not enough for you.'").

66 Introduction by Criscuolo 1979, 43.

67 Criscuolo 1979, vv. 407–408; see also vv. 185–186, 817–818.

The last word seems echoed in our poem's *τοξοκράτας* (v. 10). It is significant that each of these words is a *hapax legomenon*. Howard-Johnston opined that Theodosius had composed his history "out of phrases culled from Classical texts, like a mosaic composed of recycled glass cubes",⁶⁸ but he was also a great inventor of neologisms.⁶⁹ Even the innocent-looking word at the end of verse 13 of our poem, *φονουργία*, appears three times in *De Creta capta*⁷⁰ and these are the first three occurrences of the word recorded in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG). In v. 11 of our poem, the catch-all phrase *τὸ σὸν στράτευμα* stands out because it would be expected to occur at either the start or the end of the list of military units. Apart from once in Josephus, this collocation occurs only in *De Creta capta*, and indeed twice.⁷¹ Its positioning in the poem may therefore be an intentional pointer to this source.

The second text with parallels in our poem is the *History* of Leo the Deacon, an important and at times eye-witness source for the years from 959 to around 990; it was published probably just before the year 1000. The phrase *Ῥωσικὴ πανοπλία*, as in v. 12 of our poem, occurs no less than four times in the *History*, and always in the sense of the whole Rus army rather than a suit of armour. What makes this especially significant is that the collocation does not occur anywhere else in the whole of the TLG, except for our poem. There may also be a parallel in Leo's description of Nikephoros' preparations for defence of the City against the Rus in 969: *τὴν πεζικὴν στρατιὰν ἐξήρτυε, καὶ τοὺς λόχους καθώπλιζε, καὶ τὴν ἱππικὴν φάλαγγα ἐς βάθος διέταττε, καὶ πανσιδῆρους ἱππότητας ἀπέφαινε*⁷²—which our poem neatly summarizes in vv. 10–11, except for the archers in v. 10 who may derive, as suggested above, from *De Creta capta*.

The second part of our poem portrays Constantinopolitan devotees of Nikephoros praying around his tomb, begging for a miracle. The *Office for Saint Nikephoros Phokas*⁷³ presents a similar scenario. It mentions that Nikephoros was sleeping on the floor when he was captured, and prayed rather than

68 Howard-Johnston 2014, 41.

69 Lauritzen 2012, 119 n. 22 conflates *σκηπτοκρατ-* and *σκηπτροκρατ-* but makes the valid point that words based on these compound stems appear first in *De Creta capta* and are then picked up by Psellos and later authors, especially Constantine Manasses. See also words unique to Theodosius and others that appear first in Theodosius in the introduction in Criscuolo 1979, 42–62.

70 Criscuolo 1979, vv. 341, 483, 576.

71 Criscuolo 1979, vv. 59, 843.

72 Hase 1828, 78.19–79.3 ("he equipped the infantry and formed them into companies, he drilled the cavalry thoroughly, and he introduced iron-clad knights").

73 The *Office's* editor entertained the possibility that it was written by Theodosius the Deacon: Petit 1904, 400.

defended himself as he was being slain, and that his corpse was decapitated, details which can be found in Leo the Deacon's *History*.⁷⁴ It makes reference to the saint's asceticism and many all-night prayer vigils⁷⁵ (alluded to, perhaps, in verse 7 of our poem, "Who wished not to sleep even a little, even at night"). Nikephoros is addressed as ἄναξ.⁷⁶ He had Christ's strength⁷⁷ and was armed with a divine spirit.⁷⁸ He was Christ's most powerful emperor, and he completely destroyed the alien nations of the Hagarenes, reducing cities to subjection and expanding the empire⁷⁹—statements similar to those of Geometres. Nikephoros is said to have presided over his people more as a priest than an emperor.⁸⁰ The people gather round his tomb, which exudes the fragrance of myrrh.⁸¹ Miracles take place, the sick are cured, demons are expelled.⁸² Nikephoros in heaven intercedes for the faithful.⁸³ He drank the cup that Christ drank,⁸⁴ he is a martyr, his spilled blood sanctifies like that of a sacrificial lamb.⁸⁵ The queen of cities rejoiced in his protection and he never failed her.⁸⁶ The *Office* refers to the enemies he defeated and to his murderers only in general terms (there is no mention of a woman or of Tzimiskes); the emphasis is on Nikephoros *qua* saint, and the locus of his cult—as in our poem—is his tomb.⁸⁷

What is not found in the *Office* is an appeal to Nikephoros to rise from his tomb and rescue the City. Theophanes reports a historical precedent for such an appeal: in 813 the Bulgarian Krum had laid siege to Constantinople and was devastating its suburbs, and some fanatics broke into the mausoleum of the Holy Apostles and begged at the tomb of Constantine V for him to rise and rescue Constantinople.⁸⁸ Theophanes condemns them for praying to the dead emperor rather than to God, and goes on to denounce them as Paulician

74 Petit 1904, 401.24, 405.90–406.105, 412.121–127, 418.37–49; Hase 1828, 86.20–88.3, 90.22–91.3.

75 Petit 1904, 404.40–46, 405.76–80, 410.51–411.55; cf. Hase 1828, 89.21–24.

76 Petit 1904, 407.145, 408.184, 417.5.

77 Petit 1904, 411.76–78.

78 Petit 1904, 401.5, 404.47–49.

79 Petit 1904, 401.5–7, 411.76–82, 419.13–24.

80 Petit 1904, 405.81–82.

81 Petit 1904, 415.221–223, 416.260–277.

82 Petit 1904, 413.143–149, 415.206–227.

83 Petit 1904, 401.28–402.31, 417.19–20, 419.10–11.

84 Petit 1904, 407.155–157.

85 Petit 1904, 401.25–27, 407.159–165.

86 Petit 1904, 405.69–75.

87 On the centrality of the tomb in the cult of a saint see Mango 1997, 263–264.

88 De Boor 1883, 501.9: "ἀνάστηθι" λέγοντες, "καὶ βοήθησον τῇ πολιτείᾳ ἀπολλυμένην".

heretics. At the end of our poem, the people go one step further: as their expectations of the emperor's physical intervention diminish, his implied power increases until it surpasses even that of Christ, for this dead emperor can save all Christians even without rising from the tomb.

Let us return for a moment to the attempts that have been made to locate the poem in a specific historical context. Central to the discussion are verses 12–16:

ὁρμᾶ καθ' ἡμῶν Ῥωσικὴ πανοπλία·
 Σκυθῶν ἔθνη σφύζουσιν εἰς φονουργίαν·
 λεηλατοῦσι πᾶν ἔθνος τὴν σὴν πόλιν,
 οὓς ἐπτόει πρὶν καὶ γεγραμμένος τύπος
 πρὸ τῶν πυλῶν, σός, ἐν πόλει Βυζαντίου.

The reference in v. 15 to a γεγραμμένος τύπος ... σός remains obscure. Whatever might be denoted by the phrase—a painting of Nikephoros himself or of another subject commissioned by him, a column with a relief sculpture, a text or even a monogram—no record has been found of any episode in which Nikephoros' enemies were frightened away by any such object. Geometres has a poem with the lemma, “What words lord emperor Nikephoros, among the saints, might have said when his images were being decapitated”,⁸⁹ but there is no hint that these were regarded as apotropaic. In another poem, Geometres describes the statue that should be built for Nikephoros, his victorious (νικηφόρος) right arm pointing east like that of the equestrian Justinian atop his column, his left arm extending towards the west, his head crowned with stars,⁹⁰ and perhaps it is this statue, inscribed only on a page, that is alluded to in vv. 15–16. Such effigies were believed to be talismanic.⁹¹ What is certain, however, is that the speakers in the second part of the poem are portrayed as people who would put their faith in such a material object.

89 Van Opstall 2008a, 282: Τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους ὁ ἐν ἁγίοις βασιλεὺς κύρ Νικηφόρος, ἀποτεμνομένων τῶν εἰκόνων αὐτοῦ; This poem appears to be the only evidence for a *damnatio* of Nikephoros' memory: Eastmond 2003, 80.

90 Cramer 1841, 266.20–267.21; Geometres' wording clearly recalls the equestrian statue of Justinian as described by Procopius, *Aed.* 1.2.12.

91 Barry 2010, 11–13: “Virtually all the columns in Constantinople were attributed with talismanic powers, especially Justinian's, the crowning effigy of which was so feared by the Turks that in 1453 Mehmet had it dethroned and broken up.”

Poppe claims that “Scythians” normally means Bulgarians (except where “Bulgarian tribes” [φύλα Βουλγάρων] are mentioned in the same context),⁹² yet he reads vv. 12–16 of our poem as referring exclusively to the Rus.⁹³ Lauxtermann renders the phrase Σκυθῶν ἔθνη as “Scythian tribes” but assumes that it refers to the Bulgarians,⁹⁴ an identification which he thinks would strengthen the argument for dating the poem to late 988 or early 989, since the Bulgarians were not a threat in 970 but were a very grave threat after they had defeated the Byzantines in 986. Careful examination of the sources, however, does not support the proposition that the Bulgarians were referred to as Scyths. In the 4th or 3rd century BCE a certain Timonax wrote that there were fifty-five ἔθνη (not φύλα) of Scyths.⁹⁵ Theophanes, in the 9th century CE, identified one Scythian ἔθνος as Goths, another as Huns, and a third as Chazars.⁹⁶ In the 10th century Leo the Deacon added the Tauroscyths, whom he said were popularly known as the Rus.⁹⁷ Skylitzes in the 11th century added the Pechenegs.⁹⁸ When archaizing, these historians refer to the Bulgarians as Mysians/Moesians. Furthermore, Leo the Deacon refers to the Μυσῶν ἔθνος in the singular.⁹⁹ The adjective “Scythian” can alternate with “barbarian” in the sense of uncivilized; when refusing to pay the agreed tribute to the Bulgarians, for example, Nikephoros Phokas used it—in the singular—as a term of abuse.¹⁰⁰ The Bulgarian Tsar Samuel can behave in a Scythian manner,¹⁰¹ and Nikephoros Phokas can address the Emir of Carthage using Scythian speech.¹⁰² But the Byzantine historians, and John Geometres, always clearly distinguish the Bulgarians from the Scyths. It does not seem that the phrase in v. 13, Σκυθῶν ἔθνη, can mean “tribes of Bulgarians”.

The verb ληλατοῦσι in v. 14 could mean that the enemy were plundering the suburbs of Constantinople, as the Bulgarians are said to have done in 813 and the Rus in 860. In the poem, the City may be under siege but does not seem to be under occupation—if it were, it would surely be impossible for Nikephoros to marshal his troops in the manner suggested in vv. 10–11. Poppe

92 Poppe 1976, 215, with reference to Geometres’ poem *On the Bulgarians* (Εἰς τοὺς Βουλγάρους) at Cramer 1841, 282.29–283.8.

93 Poppe 1976, 216.

94 Lauxtermann 2003, 233–235.

95 Jacoby 1954, s.v. ‘Timonax (842)’.

96 De Boor 1883, 66.2–3 (and Hase 1828, 18.23), 102.17, 409.30–31.

97 Hase 1828, 63.8–10; cf. Thurn 1973, 107.45–46.

98 Thurn 1973, 455.32–34.

99 Hase 1828, 104.5.

100 Hase 1828, 61.19–20: ἔθνει Σκυθικῶ, πενιχρῶ τε τὴν ἄλλως καὶ μιαρῶ....

101 Hase 1828, 123.4–11.

102 Hase 1828, 76.12.

and Lauxtermann reject 970 as the date of our poem's composition on the grounds that the Rus did not get inside Constantinople at that time. They go on to explain v. 14 as an over-reaction by the people to the presence in the City of foreign allied troops, that is, the Rus provided to Basil II by Vladimir in 988/989.¹⁰³ There is no contemporary evidence to support this view; indeed, the alliance with the Rus does not merit even a mention by Leo the Deacon, and in Skylitzes it is a mere aside.¹⁰⁴ Lauxtermann replaces $\pi\alpha\nu$ ἔθνος with Statmüller's emendation $\pi\alpha\nu\sigma\theta\epsilon\nu\omega\varsigma$ as this removes an awkward bit of syntax,¹⁰⁵ but all manuscripts stubbornly retain $\pi\alpha\nu$ ἔθνος.

Trying to fit the poem into the year 988/989 requires rather forced argumentation and doctoring of the text, as well as a measure of tone-deafness. The determination to find an identifiable historical context at all costs is a hangover from the attribution of the poem to John Geometres. Once the heavy shadow of Geometres is lifted, however, it is easy to see that the historical context suggested in vv. 12–16 of the poem is fictional. The progression from “Russian armour” to “nations of Scyths” to “every nation” is an instance of the figure of speech known as a *tricolon ascendens*.¹⁰⁶ Each successive verse intensifies the threat, and the tricolon ends in hyperbole. Here, as elsewhere, our poet was clearly familiar with the canons of rhetoric.

This brings me to my conclusion. It may be a coincidence that our sole manuscript of *Creta capta* also contains our earliest and most complete collection of Geometres' poetry.¹⁰⁷ It may also be a coincidence that the earliest manuscript witnesses to our poem appended it to extracts from Leo the Deacon in the margin of a now lost Skylitzes manuscript whose surviving apographa incorporated the *marginalium* into Skylitzes' text, and that one of these apographa (and its fourteenth-century 'cousin') also contains Michael Attaleiates' *History*, in which our poem seems to have been quoted. But the intertextuality observed in our poem is too intense for it to be explained as happenstance. John of Melitene seems to have deliberately selected characteristic words,

103 Poppe 1976, 217; Lauxtermann 2003, 236.

104 Hase 1828, 173.25–174.6; Thurn 1973, 336.88–90.

105 Lauxtermann 2003, 309.

106 Smith Jr 2011, 110–111.

107 Lauxtermann 2003, 289: “It is reasonable to assume that the Capture of Crete and the collection of Geometres' miscellaneous works could be found together in an early eleventh-century manuscript, which is, either directly or indirectly, the source used by the scribe of Par. Suppl. gr. 352.” While the Geometres quires 21–24 are all in the same hand and three different hands are involved in the text of quire 18, with *De Creta capta*, van Opstall 2008a, 106, observes that the distribution of hands indicates that quires 18–24 derive from the same atelier.

expressions and images from an extensive dossier on Nikephoros, and to have distilled and translated them into a well-structured dramatized contrast between two very different responses to his memory. Commentators have spoken about “the poet” and identified as his the words spoken by the collective voice in the second part of the poem, words which they have taken at face value.¹⁰⁸ But this voice stands in an antiphonal relationship with the singular voice of the first part, and the last verse, of the poem. Neither voice can be identified with the poet; both voices are products of his creative imagination.

Though we cannot be certain that every allusion in our poem has been excavated or correctly identified and evaluated, the second part of the poem clearly parodies Geometres, or rather the extreme fringe of the cult of Nikephoros, by taking Geometres’ poetic inventions literally and carrying them to the point of absurdity. Whereas the first persona in the poem accepts the emperor’s fate, the second is in denial. It starts by bidding Nikephoros to rise from the tomb, addressing the emperor as *ἀναξ*—a term also frequently applied to Christ by Gregory of Nazianzus and others¹⁰⁹—and using the verb *ἀνάστα* (the noun for Christ’s resurrection is *ἀνάστασις*). The *Office* too refers to Nikephoros as *ἀναξ* but does not expect him to rise from his tomb. It has been seen that Theophanes condemned such prayer as blasphemous, the work of heretics. Deference to Nikephoros’ prowess at military organization in vv. 10–11, with its echoes of the deacons Theodosios and Leo, is followed in vv. 12–14 by a fictional threat to Constantinople, couched in vocabulary that is again redolent of the same sources. Geometres praised Nikephoros to the stars and predicted that Basil II’s alliance with the Rus would have dire consequences,¹¹⁰ and the collective voice takes Geometres’ prediction to an extreme, revealing that it would put its faith in a material object, which may also be an allusion to Geometres. The stones for defence in vv. 19–20 may recall the wall Nikephoros built around the palace but, in the Geometres fictional epitaph quoted earlier, even the deceased Nikephoros knew this to have been ineffective, an irony of which the second persona seems to be completely oblivious.¹¹¹ This is followed

108 Mercati 1921, 158; Cresci 1995, 58.

109 See, for example, Hofer 2013, 77.

110 See the poems *On Lord Nikephoros the Emperor* (Cramer 1841, 266.20–267.21) and *On the Bulgarians* (Cramer 1841, 282.29–283.8).

111 Skylitzes emphasizes the irony by indicating that Nikephoros died on the very day that the keys to the wall were handed over to him: τοῦ τείχους γὰρ τελειωθέντος, τότε συνέβη καὶ αὐτὸν κατ’ αὐτὴν τὴν ἡμέραν ἀποθανεῖν, ὅπηνίκα τὰς κλεῖς ὁ τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν ἐπιτετραμμένος φέρων αὐτῷ ἐνεχείρισε (Thurn 275.85–87) (“When the wall was finished, it happened that he died on the very same day on which the contractor brought the keys and handed them over to him”).

by a fairly explicit allusion to Geometres in the request for a roar from the tomb that would repel the enemy, and then by the absurd paradox that salvation can be found ultimately in the emperor's tomb as he is, apparently, greater than Christ. Theophanes would have been apoplectic.

The poem is not about the emperor Nikephoros so much as about the over-the-top second persona when contrasted with the measured and not unsympathetic realism of the first persona. As such, it could never have been engraved on the emperor's tomb or penned by Geometres. Elements drawn from pro-Nikephoros literature are turned against this very literature. Exaggeration and a *reductio ad absurdum* satirize those who would take the cult of Nikephoros beyond sanctioned limits. The perspective is primarily literary and religious. If any politics were involved, they would be ecclesiastical.

The poem cannot have been composed before 995, which is the last date possibly referred to by Leo the Deacon.¹¹² If the author of the *Office* drew historical details from Leo's *History*, our poem is likely to have been composed some years later. I would suggest that its non-archaizing intertextuality belongs to the increasingly sophisticated literary milieu of the 11th century, a time when poets are known to have targeted religious excess and the excesses of religious.¹¹³ In this respect it is not incompatible with what we know about John of Melitene. Our poem is a *ludus ingenii* that combines tragic irony with a parody through hyperbole of a cult of Nikephoros as super-hero, martyr, saint and saviour.

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¹¹² Talbot and Sullivan 2005, 9–10.

¹¹³ Magdalino 2012, 28–29.

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Byzantine Religious Tales in Latin Translation: The Work of John of Amalfi

John Duffy

At any given time after the 6th or 7th century there were at least a thousand religious tales and pieces of edifying monastic folklore, floating in various forms around the Byzantine empire. This is the number estimated by one of the best living experts on the subject, John Wortley, who has compiled a very useful Repertoire of Byzantine Beneficial Tales that is available online.¹ It is a surprising fact that relatively few of these were ever translated into Latin. There are of course some exceptions. There was an early Latin version of the *Lausiac History* of Palladius (or at least part of it) and Rufinus translated the *Historia Monachorum in Egypto*;² much later some individual edifying stories made their way into books of western *exempla*, i.e. illustrative tales that were formed into collections from the 12th century onwards, especially for preaching purposes.³ We also have a report that a translation was made of John Moschus' *Pratum Spirituale* in the 9th century, but no trace of that has survived.⁴ All the more interesting and important, then, is the systematic translation of 42 Byzantine tales made in the 11th century by a western monk and priest residing in Constantinople, John of Amalfi, otherwise known as Johannes Monachus.

This man and his translating activities were completely unknown in modern times until an Austrian Benedictine, Bernhard Pez, found a work under John's name with the title *Liber de miraculis* in a Bavarian manuscript and published its prologue in 1721.⁵ But nothing further was done with the material until 1884 when the German scholar Max Hoferer examined five Munich

1 Wortley 1991.

2 See Dihle 1994, 416.

3 For example, in the well-known collections of Jacobus de Voragine (*Legenda aurea*) and Caesarius von Heisterbach (*Dialogus miraculorum*).

4 John the Deacon in his late ninth-century life of Gregory the Great claims that his teacher had translated the work: book II, ch. 45 (PL 75. 106A). The text of the *Pratum* is printed in PG 87³. 2852–3112.

5 Pez 1721, 631.

manuscripts containing the translation, edited the first story from them, and commented in some detail on the style of the Latin version.⁶ He also attempted to say something about the life and time of the author, but was unable to offer any secure information on the subject. A major advance was made in 1913 by the Benedictine Michael Huber who prepared the first critical edition of the Latin text and included an important introduction that threw much new light on the identity and time of the translator.⁷

Going far beyond the interesting but meager information contained in the translator's prologue, Huber was able, on the basis of a twelfth-century Latin manuscript in Vienna, to argue that this John was a bilingual priest and monk of Amalfi who had spent some time in residence at the Zoodochos Pege monastery in Constantinople around the second half of the 11th century. The Vienna manuscript in question, Vind. lat. 739, is of south Italian origin and was completed in Naples in the year 1174. It contains a collection of saints' lives and theological tracts, including a number of translations from Greek originals, several of which have never been published. In the 1920s and '30s Adolf Hofmeister did further exploration in this important witness and was able to improve on Huber's findings in several respects.⁸

The current portrait, then, of John the translator and his activities, based on the results of both Huber and Hofmeister, would be as follows: John was certainly from the Naples region, if not born in Amalfi itself, and during his time in the Byzantine capital he had very close relations with members of the Amalfitan merchant class who encouraged him in his translating activities. He is likely to have lived closer to the end of the 11th century, rather than in the middle, and was quite old when he completed the so-called *Liber de miraculis*. Apart from that work he also produced Latin versions of a sermon on the death of Nicholas of Myra and of the Life of St. Eirene; both of these translations survive in the Vienna manuscript and, apart from their prologues, still await their first edition. Also in the Vienna manuscript is a Latin version of the Life of John the Almsgiver. This is not the one prepared by the ninth-century papal librarian, Anastasius Bibliothecarius, and Hofmeister is of the opinion that it may be by our John. It too remains unpublished.

So let us turn now to the *Liber de miraculis*, i.e. the text edited by Huber, and the focus of attention in this chapter. The first point to be made is that the title, as Hoferer already indicated,⁹ is probably not original. Judging by his remarks

6 Hoferer 1884.

7 Huber 1913.

8 Hofmeister 1920.

9 Hoferer 1884, 49.

in the prologue and epilogue, John, if he ever gave it a title, would be more likely to have called his work “A Selection of Greek Narratives”. In any case, the book consists of 42 spiritually beneficial tales, of which 20 are taken from the *Pratum Spirituale* of Moschus while the remaining 22 have various origins, several of them connected to the collections associated with Daniel of Sketis and Anastasius of Sinai. The first two tales, however, one of them much longer than the usual διήγησις ψυχωφελής, date from the period of iconoclasm and are quite well known in their own right—the first is the extensive legend of the Christ Antiphonetes icon, originally printed by Combefis in 1648,¹⁰ and the second is the account of the patrician and his notary who had a strange encounter with an image of Christ in Hagia Sophia; this was also edited by Combefis¹¹ and reprinted by Dobschütz in his well-known study *Christusbilder*.¹²

Leaving aside the first icon story, as being somewhat *sui generis* in this context, a natural question would be, “Where did John of Amalfi get his hands on the John Moschus material and the other tales?”—in other words, “What were the translator’s Greek source texts?” The issue was raised very briefly by Huber and he made the excellent suggestion that, rather than drawing on a number of different manuscripts, John may simply have used one compilation of edifying tales. He was led to this idea by the researches carried out in the previous decade (i.e. from 1902 onwards) by the French scholars Léon Clugnet and François Nau who, between them, published pioneering studies on the class of book called *paterika*, that is, collections of religious tales put together, in the first instance, for spiritual reading or recitation in monasteries.¹³ Of the several Paris *paterika* manuscripts cited by Huber, the most relevant and the most important by far for our purposes is Par. gr. 1596, dating from the 11th century. The book consists almost entirely of stories extracted from the following sources: the *Historia Lausiaca* of Palladius, the anonymous *Historia Monachorum in Egypto*, the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, the *Pratum Spirituale* of Moschus, and individual tales from both Daniel of Sketis and Anastasius of Sinai. Now, when we take those last three components of Par. 1596 (i.e. Moschus, Daniel and Anastasius) and compare the contents of John of Amalfi, the tally of coincidence is as follows: of the 41 stories in John of Amalfi that we are taking into account, 18 are to be found in Par. gr. 1596. But when the comparison is made with two other *paterika* analyzed by Clugnet and Nau (namely, Coislin 126 and 283) the coincidences are considerably smaller (only 7 shared stories with

10 Combefis 1648, 612–644.

11 Combefis 1648, 647–660.

12 von Dobschütz 1899, 226*–231*

13 The most notable, for present purposes, is Nau & Clugnet 1902/1903.

Coislin 283 and 6 with Coislin 126).¹⁴ It is, to be sure, conceivable that a similar *paterikon* will come to light some day containing many more of the stories that John of Amalfi translated, but until such a time it is reasonable to claim that Par. gr. 1956 is the closest we can come to having the Greek source text of the Latin translation. And the closeness is further supported when the Greek and Latin versions of the stories are compared—something that Huber did not attempt. We will give an illustration of this later.

But before that, we should discuss what if anything John says about himself and about his method or style of translating. In the three prefaces that have been so far published we learn a little about his personal life, though it is only a small kernel surrounded by the hard shell of clichés that we typically find in monastic writing, East and West—the usual commonplaces of humility, worthlessness and inability to do as good a job as others might have done with the same material. He repeatedly complains or excuses himself because of old age and poor eyesight. In introducing the *Liber de miraculis* he puts the reader on notice that his work is just a first draft; because of age, weakness of the eyes and kidney problems, he was not able to prepare a corrected version. If he had had the possibility to revise, he would have found a more agreeable and pleasant style.¹⁵ In the preface to the sermon on the death of Nicholas of Myra, John explains how he came across the text and then translated it to the best of his ability in simple language (*communis sermonibus*).¹⁶

That is about the sum of what he says concerning himself and his *modus operandi*. Clearly, then, he does not give us a lot of information on anything that could be called a theory of translation. Of the three German scholars who in earlier times engaged substantially with John and his work (namely, Hoferer,

14 Nau 1907, and continued in two subsequent issues. For the stories in Coislin 283 see Clugnet & Nau 1901.

15 Hoc enim notum sit omnibus in quorum manibus ventura sunt hec opuscula seu narrationes, quia prima exemplaria sunt translata a greco in latinum. Et, ut scitis omnes, quia qui epistolam vult scribere alicui, primum exemplat, postea emendat et iam emendata conscribit. Michi autem non fuit ista possibilitas quia, ut iam dixi, in ultima senectute constitutus et oculi caligant michi et renes dolent, non potui plus facere. Etenim si possibilitas rescribendi esset, et verba consonantia invenirem et stilum aliquem dulcem in componendo haberem. (Huber 1913, 1–2).

16 Unde ego infimus Johannes presbiter et monachus, cum in urbe Constantinopolitana manerem, sancti patris ductus amore quesivi et inveni, et non in qualibuscunque scidulis, sed in archivis et in emendatis codicibus. Et secundum tenuitatem sensus mei interpretatus sum, ut potui, communis quidem sermonibus, sed veritate firmatis atque munitis. (Vind. lat. 739, fol. 174v, as quoted by Hofmeister 1924, 136) “communis” is the ms. reading.

Huber, and Hofmeister), the only one who dealt directly with the question of method and style is Hoferer in his monograph of 1884. In it he devoted considerable space to comparing the Greek text of the long Antiphonetes legend with the Latin version and came to the rather bald conclusion that John attempted to render the Greek ‘word for word’.¹⁷ It is not clear that he meant this in direct contrast to the traditionally opposite style of translating ‘according to the sense’, but in any case it probably does not do full justice to John’s way of doing things.

For a better appreciation of the principles that are likely to have guided him, it will be useful and interesting to look at a relevant text that does discuss translation theory. It was penned by a monk, Leo, a member of the Amalfitan monastery on Mt. Athos sometime during the 11th century (it is not known for certain whether he is to be dated in the beginning or in the middle of the century). The only surviving work of his that we know about is a Latin version of the *Miracle of Michael of Chonae*, the prologue of which was printed in an early number of the *Analecta Bollandiana*.¹⁸ Here is the text with my non-literal translation of the section central to our purposes:

Hoc sane sciendum est, quia fortasse in verbis de graeco aliquid discrepare videtur sensu, tamen nil distat, sed ... alibi verbum verbo, alibi vero sensum tantummodo transtulisse fatemur, sicuti et majores nostros fecisse compertum habemus, qui cum aliquid de graeco in latinum transferre curaverunt non verbum verbo, sed sensum sensu exponere studuerunt. Quod nos magis necessitate fecimus quam voluntate, quia si illud per totum sicut in graeco habetur eloquio, ita latinis sermonibus exponere voluissem, tam insipidum inconueniensque sonaret ut non modo aedificationem nullam legentibus, sed fastidium generaret.

We want the reader to know that, while perhaps there might appear to be some difference in meaning in the wording of the translation from the Greek, there is in fact no discrepancy. Rather ... we claim to have translated sometimes verbatim and at other times merely according to sense. That is what our predecessors [i.e. the translators of old] also did, as we personally know; when they undertook to convert something from Greek into Latin, they strove to make their version not “word for word”,

17 Hoferer 1884, 65: “Prüfen wir nun die Art und Weise, wie Johannes übersetzte, so finden wir, dass er sich bemüht hat, den griechischen Text wörtlich wiederzugeben.”

18 Bollandistes 1890.

but “sense for sense”. This we have done more out of necessity than out of choice, because if we had wanted to compose a Latin version that corresponded throughout to the Greek wording, it would sound so unpalatable and so disagreeable that it would not only preclude all edification but would also induce loathing in the reader.¹⁹

It would appear from this *apologia* that Leo is pushing back against an expectation that his translation should be a literal one, and he is at the same time advocating a way of doing things that combines both approaches.²⁰ I would argue that John too subscribes to such a policy without making his own statement about it. To illustrate this I take one of the stories that he translates in order to compare it with the Greek version as found in Par. gr. 1596.²¹ In the text of each version I have marked some sample passages either in italics for more or less direct correspondence between the Greek and the Latin, or with underlining in the Latin, and bold in the Greek, for places where John is translating according to the sense of the original and is taking some liberties.

Διηγῆσατο ἡμῖν καὶ τοῦτο ὁ ἀββάς Παλλάδιος λέγων ὅτι, «γέρων τις κοσμικός ἐκρατήθη φόνον ποιήσας ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου Ἀλεξανδρείας. Ὁ δὲ γέρων κολαζόμενος ἔλεγε καὶ ἄλλον εἶναι σὺν αὐτῷ κοινωνὸν τοῦ φόνου· ὃν δὲ ἔλεγεν ὁ γέρων παῖς ἦν ὡς ἐτῶν κ'. Πολλὰ οὖν καὶ ἀμφότεροι ἐτιμωρήθησαν. Ἔλεγε δὲ ὁ γέρων ὅτι, “μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἦν ὅτε τὸν φόνον ἐποίησα.” ὁ δὲ νεώτερος ἔλεγε μὴ ἔχειν αὐτὸν πρᾶγμα εἰς τὸν φόνον μὴδὲ εἶναι μετ’ αὐτοῦ. Ὡς οὖν ἐκολάσθησαν πολλὰ, ἔλαβον ἀπόφασιν ἀμφότεροι ἵνα φουρκισθῶσι. Καὶ παραλαβόντες αὐτοὺς οἱ στρατιῶται, ἀποφέρουσιν εἰς τὸ Πέμπτον· ἐκεῖ γὰρ τοὺς τοιοῦτους εἰώθασιν κολάζειν. Ἔστι δὲ ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίου ἐνὸς ἱερὸν καταλελυμμένον τοῦ Κρόνου. Ὡς οὖν ἦλθον εἰς τὸν τόπον ὃ τε δῆμιος καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται, ἤθελαν τὸν νεώτερον πρῶτον κρεμάσαι εἰς τὸ ξύλον. Ὁ δὲ νεώτερος ἔβαλε μετάνοιαν τοῖς στρατιώταις

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- 19 Bollandistes 1890, 202–203. I have highlighted the crucial phrases. The complete edition of the translation was published (as kindly pointed out by the anonymous reader of this chapter) by Nau 1908. The same reader also makes the interesting suggestion that possible ties between Leo and John could be a subject of further research. If and when more information about these two figures becomes available, the question of shared ideas on translation should be pursued. There is a recent and excellent overview of the Amalfitans in Byzantium by von Falkenhausen 2010, esp. 30–37.
- 20 There is a good discussion of Leo and translation styles of his era in Chiesa 1983, esp. 533–537. Among his observations is the following (536–537): “Leone Amalfitano, traduttore del *Miraculum Michaelis*, dedica ampio spazio a descrivere e a giustificare il suo metodo di traduzione, che tenta di armonizzare la versione *e sensu* con quella *e verbo*.”
- 21 John Moschus, *Pratum Spirituale* no. 72, in Paris. gr. 1596, 454–455 (Huber 1913, 454, no. 10).

λέγων, “διὰ τὸν Κύριον ποιήσατε ἀγάπην, ἵνα κατὰ ἀνατολὰς προσέχω ὡς κρέμωμαι.” Λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ στρατιῶται, “διὰ τί;” Λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ νεώτερος, “ὄντως, κύριοί μου, οὐκ ἔχω εἰ μὴ ἑπτὰ μῆνας ὅτι τὸ ἅγιον βάπτισμα ἔλαβον καὶ γέγονα Χριστιανός.” Ὡς οὖν ἤκουσαν οἱ στρατιῶται ἐδάκρυσαν ἐπὶ τῷ νεωτέρῳ. Ὁ δὲ γέρων ἀκούσας καὶ ῥογχάσας μέγα, λέγει τοῖς στρατιώταις, “τὸν Σέραπιν, ἐμὲ κατὰ τὸν Κρόνον κρεμάσατε καὶ ποιήσατε προσέχειν.” Τότε ὡς ἤκουσαν τὴν βλασφημίαν τοῦ γέροντος οἱ στρατιῶται, ἔασαντες τὸν νεώτερον, πρῶτον τὸν γέροντα ἐκρέμασαν. Ὡς δὲ ἐφούρκιζον τὸν γέροντα, ἰδοὺ καβαλλάριος πεμφθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Αὐγουσταλίου εἶπε τοῖς στρατιώταις ὅτι, “τὸν νεώτερον μὴ φονεύσητε, ἀλλὰ φέρετε ὧδε αὐτόν.” Οἱ δὲ στρατιῶται ἀκούσαντες ἐχάρησαν καὶ πάντες οἱ παρεστώτες | (p. 455) ἐκείσε ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεόν. Καὶ ἀπαγαγόντες αὐτόν εἰς τὸ Πραιτώριον εἰσήγαγον πρὸς τὸν Αὐγουστάλιον· ὁ δὲ Αὐγουστάλιος ἀπέλυσε αὐτόν μετ’ εἰρήνης. Ὁ δὲ νεώτερος ἀπολυθεὶς ἀπελθὼν γέγονε μοναχός.» Τοῦτο δὲ ἐγράψαμεν πρὸς ὠφέλειαν ἡμῶν τε καὶ ὑμῶν, πρὸς τὸ εἰδέναι ἡμᾶς ὅτι οἶδε Κύριος εὐσεβεῖς ῥύεσθαι ἐκ πειρασμῶν, ἀσεβεῖς δὲ τηρεῖν εἰς ἡμέραν κολάσεως.

The Latin version of John of Amalfi reads thus:²²

Narravit nobis abbas Palladius dicens: *Senex quidam secularis deprehensus est in Alexandria in homicidio. Qui diucius extortus et maceratus suppliciis dixit nequaquam se fuisse solum in homicidio, sed socium habuisse quendam iuvenem qui erat annorum circiter triginta.* Multum autem utrique afflicti sunt a tortoribus. Dicebat enim senex quia “mecum fuit in homicidio;” *iuvenis autem dicebat “nequaquam.”* Quid multa? Post diversa tormenta acceperunt utrique sententiam ut infurcarentur. Et accipientes eos milites una cum carnificibus deduxerunt in eum locum qui dicitur “Quinto”. Ibi enim soliti erant puniri qui huiusmodi noxe erant. Est enim in loco illo templum Saturni desertum. *Cum autem venissent omnes simul in loco milites cum carnificibus, voluerunt iuvenem primum appendere in ligno.* Qui procidens ad pedes militum rogabat eos dicens: “Propter Deum, domini mei, facite caritatem ut contra orientem faciatis (p. 55) me aspicere, cum appenderitis me.” Et dixerunt: “Quare?” Et dixit eis: “*Vere, domini mei, non habeo nisi septem menses ex quo sanctum baptismum suscepi et factus sum christianus.*” Senex autem indignans et irridens verba iuvenis ait: “Me vero contra Serapin et Saturnum facite aspicere.” Ut autem audierunt milites blasphemiam senis, appenderunt ipsum primum. *Providentia vero Dei usque dum illum infurcarent, ecce caballarius in festinancia missus ad milites ab Augustalio ut senem quidem*

22 Huber 1913, 54.

appenderent, iuvenem autem ad se reducerent. Quod audientes milites gavisus sunt gaudio magno et qui ibi stabant glorificaverunt Deum qui salvos facit sperantes in se. Et reducentes illum ad Pretorium presentaverunt Augustalio. Quem ut vidit, dedit ei absolutionem et dimisit in pace. Iuvenis autem abiit et factus est perfectissimus monachus. Hec vero scripsimus, ut sciant omnes quia novit Dominus iustos de temptationibus eripere, impios autem servare ad diem tormentorum.

This story is one of the seven tales that Moschus and his younger disciple Sophronius collected from Palladios, the abbot of a monastery at Lithazomen, to the west of Alexandria. Briefly summed up, the delightful narrative tells of two men, an older and a younger one, condemned at Alexandria on a murder charge. When they are brought to the Fifth milestone for execution the younger man pleads to be hung facing the East, telling the soldiers that he had just been converted to Christianity seven months previously. The older one, an inveterate pagan, scoffs at the Christian and asks to be hung facing a ruined temple of Kronos that was nearby. The soldiers then decide to hang the old fellow first, but just before they get to the younger one, a messenger arrives from the office of the Praefectus Augustalis, and the Christian is saved in the nick of time. The moral of the tale is: "The Lord rescues the pious from tribulations, but the impious he keeps for the day of punishment."

It is hardly necessary to enter into all the details, so we will confine ourselves to two instances where there is lack of full correspondence.

a) In lines 4–5 of the Greek text the older man claims that the other one was his accomplice, saying: "He was with me when I did the murder". To which the younger replies that he had nothing to do with the killing and was not with him. In the translation, the first sentence is given literally (*Dicebat enim senex quia mecum fuit in homicidio*), but the next is very different. In this version the reply is expressed as "But the young man said «No way»" (*iuvenis autem dicebat nequaquam*).

b) In the messenger scene (in Greek ll. 19–21) there are several differences between the texts. While the Greek original says, "Lo, a horseman sent by the Augustalis said to the soldiers, "Do not execute the young man, but bring him here," John's version has, "By God's providence indeed, behold a horseman sent at speed to the soldiers from the Augustalis <said> that they should hang the old man, but bring back the young one to him."

On the basis of these and several other instances which would not be difficult to identify, one may conclude that, allowing for minor differences from the actual Greek manuscript used by John, his translation cannot be characterized as "word for word". Rather, like his fellow monk and countryman Leo,

John of Amalfi preferred a style that combined the two approaches, sometimes “sense for sense”, sometimes “verbatim”; on occasion, as well, he was not averse to slightly shortening his source text. From time to time, too, though not frequently, there are small mistakes detectable. We have one example in the story. In lines 16–17 of the Greek, the older criminal says τὸν Σέραπιν (the accusative of an oath, “By Serapis”), ἐμέ κατὰ τὸν Κρόνον κρεμάσατε (“hang me facing Kronos”). In the Latin this is rendered: *Me vero contra Serapin et Saturnum facite aspicere* (“Make me face in the direction of Serapis and Saturn”). It looks like John has not recognized the Greek idiom for taking an oath. Such instances, however, are quite rare and generally speaking the translation is a good and accurate reflection of the original.

Something else noteworthy in John’s work is the fairly frequent use of words of Greek origin, which would not have found a place in the more classicizing form of Medieval Latin. Some of them have an ecclesiastical or technical meaning, such as: *apocrisiarius* (ἀποκρισιάριος), “messenger” or “steward in a monastery”; *elemosyna* (ἐλεημοσύνη), meaning either “mercy” or “almsgiving”, depending on the context; *metania* (μετάνοια), “repentance”; *paracletus* (παράκλητος), “the Holy Ghost”. Others are Latinized words from Greek roots. For example, *catezizare* from the verb to “instruct” (κατηχίζειν); *colophizare* “to slap”, from κολαφίζειν; and *cerostata*, a term for “candelabrum”, which does not have an exact equivalent in Greek but is clearly based on κηρός, “wax or candle”. Three other general examples are: *allophilus* straight from ἀλλόφυλος, “alien” or “foreign”; *epibates* from ἐπιβάτης, “a rider on an animal” or “a passenger on a ship”; and *chirographum*, χειρόγραφον, “a document”. Now all of these words are attested from different sources in the famous dictionary of Du Cange, the *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis*, which means that when John uses them they are not just lazy or empty calques, but part of the living language, at least in Southern Italy.

As for the level of John’s Latinity, Hoferer in his monograph already nicely describes it as follows: “His language is a direct and close relative of the Church Latin of the 6th and 7th centuries. The characteristics it shares with all of late Ecclesiastical Latin result from the reading of the Bible and Church Fathers, as well as of constant interaction with the spoken language.”²³ This description, *mutatis mutandis*, could be used precisely for the language of Greek edifying stories; it is the κοινὴ διάλεκτος, the very thing that John was referring to when

23 Hoferer 1884, 68: “Seine Sprache schliesst sich im Gegenteil direkt und eng an die kirchliche Latinität des 6. und 7. Jahrhunderts an. Das dem ganzen späten Ekklesiastenlatein gemeinsame Gepräge ist aber in gleicher Weise das Ergebnis der Lektüre der Bibel und der Kirchenväter als auch eines unausgesetzt mündlichen Betriebes.”

he employed the phrase *communes sermones* to characterize his translation of the Nicholas of Myra text.

It will be appropriate to end by citing some words of Leo of Amalfi in staunch defense of the use of the *sermo communis* for his translation: "However, if anyone should find fault with my version on the grounds that it is composed in rustic, simple, and unsophisticated language, no one is forcing him to read it. Let those who wish, read it, and those who don't, let them put it aside."²⁴ It is a fair bet that John of Amalfi would have felt the same way about his own work.

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24 Leo of Amalfi, *Miracle of Michael of Chonae* (Bollandistes 1890, 203): Attamen si quis hoc reprehenderit et subsanaverit, eo quod rusticano et simplici incultoque est sermone prolatum, nemo compellit ad legendum: legant qui volunt, qui nolunt abiciant.

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Translations from Greek into Latin and Arabic during the Middle Ages: Searching for the Classical Tradition

Maria Mavroudi

Byzantium's relationship with what we call 'the Classical tradition' is a central characteristic of Byzantine civilization much discussed in modern research, primarily because 'the Classical tradition' is perceived as a constituent part of modern western culture. The present discussion will be limited to the reflection of Byzantine literary culture in medieval Latin and Arabic, primarily because their reception of Byzantium's Classical tradition has been fashioned into a history of western thought that can be summarized as follows: the sciences were born in the ancient Near East, from where the ancient Greeks received and developed them further, and also gave birth to philosophy. These flourished in the Graeco-Roman world until the Muslim conquests of the 7th century, deemed as ushering in the end of antiquity, when they entered a state of decline in Greek and Latin Christendom. However, they were received by the Muslims, mainly through the ninth- and tenth-century translations of Greek texts into Arabic (sometimes via Syriac intermediaries). This translation movement is thought to have also inspired original contributions until the Islamic world's decline from the end of the 11th century onwards. This time the rescuer was medieval Europe, where Graeco-Roman philosophy and science were repatriated through a wave of translations and adaptations from Arabic into Latin. This reception was enhanced and placed on a firmer footing in the late 14th and especially the 15th century, when Byzantine intellectuals arrived in western Europe bringing manuscripts of the ancient authors; in this way, the Europeans were able to retrieve Greek philosophy and science directly from its surviving originals without an Arabic intermediary. The facilitation of this final and irrevocable migration of philosophy and science to western Europe is deemed as Byzantium's last (and perhaps most important) contribution to the development of modern 'Western' culture.

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The full articulation of this narrative took place during Europe's colonial expansion and can be viewed as one of its ideological components, since it provides a historical explanation for modern European economic and political supremacy.¹ One of its paradoxes is that, in its imagined geography, the Greek-speaking world is deemed as 'western' in antiquity but 'eastern' in the medieval period. It largely remains in place in our post-colonial times because of its tidiness and power to explain the shape of the world today, but also the fact that even apologists on behalf of Byzantium and the Islamic world (which are ultimately marginalized by its implications) find it expedient. For example, Islam's role as foundational to late medieval and early modern European science can be used to counter negative evaluations of Islamic civilization as a whole. Similarly, 'oriental' Byzantium, though largely viewed as irrelevant to broader world history, is given an active role in 'western' cultural developments of the early modern period.

In spite of its problems, however, the narrative is not completely invented. Elements of it can be found in ancient, medieval, and Renaissance sources. The Egyptian and Babylonian origins of science are acknowledged, for example, by Ptolemy, Diodorus Siculus, and the Byzantine tradition of world chronicles.² The claim that philosophy and the sciences died out in Christian Byzantium and were transferred to the Islamic world can be found in a number of ninth- and tenth-century Arabic sources, edited and translated from the 19th century onwards and mostly taken at face value since then.³ However, Dimitri Gutas has explained that, during this time of bitter military struggle with Byzantium in which the Arabs were losing ground, emphasizing the Muslim appropriation of the pagan Greek heritage and claiming that Byzantium destroyed it because of the ideological and political break represented by Christianity was a form of anti-Byzantinism expressed as philhellenism.⁴ Gutas has also clarified that Abbasid society appropriated Greek philosophy and science in order to address its own needs: negotiating a canonical version of Islam among the

1 Cameron 2006, 47, characterizes the standard negative comparison of Byzantium with the West as 'orientalist'.

2 For references to primary sources, see Mavroudi 2006, 48.

3 Key texts conveying this idea are: al-Mas'ūdī's tenth-century *Fields of Gold* (*Murūj al-dhahab*), readily accessible in de Meynard & de Courteille 1861–1917; Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-fihrist*, ed. Flügel 1871–72; Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, *Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-a'āibbā'*, ed. Müller 1882–1884; Ibn al-Qiftī, *Ta'rikh al-ḥukamā'*, ed. Lippert 1903. Taking their narratives at face value led modern scholars to accept that ancient medical knowledge was transferred from Alexandria to Baghdad through an uninterrupted tradition of teaching; more recent scholarship considers the story of this transfer fictitious; for further details, see Gutas 1998, 90 ff.

4 Gutas 1998, 83–95.

different possibilities available at the time; and legitimizing the ascent of the Abbasids to power, both as a dynasty and as individual monarchs.⁵ For this reason, Islamic evaluations of Byzantine philosophy and science and its relation with its pagan antecedents are not consistent and can even be contradictory. Gutas analyzed a number of examples, most eloquent among which is the work of al-Jāḥiẓ (781–868 AD), a prolific author and the chief panegyrist of the Abbasid regime.⁶ In his *Book of Annals*,⁷ al-Jāḥiẓ praises the Byzantines for their achievements in philosophy and various branches of science (medicine, astronomy and astrology, arithmetic), literary culture, diplomacy, and practical craft (architecture, carpentry). This praise implies a warning to fellow Muslims: although the Byzantines are generally an enlightened people, they are capable of following the patently irrational beliefs of Christianity. Likewise, the Muslims, also an enlightened people, run the risk of following irrational and unorthodox beliefs regarding their own religion, Islam. In a different text, an anti-Christian polemic titled *The Reply against the Christians*,⁸ where the objective is to prove that neither they nor the Jews but only the Muslims possess philosophy (and therefore correct theology), al-Jāḥiẓ denies that the Byzantines have any philosophy and science of their own; instead, he explains, they falsely appropriated the achievements of the ancient Greeks and pretend this wisdom is theirs, although the Byzantines are Christian and the ancient Greeks were pagan.⁹

Arguments along the same lines are repeated by several authors around the same time and into the next centuries; they eventually became a literary *topos* picked up from earlier authors. Central is the insistence that Christianity as a religion and the Christian emperors as its institutional representatives were inimical to philosophy and science and caused its destruction, for which reason these intellectual goods no longer exist among the Christians.¹⁰

5 This means legitimizing not only the violent overthrow of the previous dynasty, the Umayyads, but also the regime of caliph al-Ma'mūn, who ascended the throne after committing fratricide and regicide (by killing his own caliph brother).

6 The contradiction was first noticed by Pellat 1967; also expounded by Gutas 1998, 85–88.

7 *Kitāb al-akhbār*.

8 *Al-radd 'alā al-naṣārā*; for references, see Gutas 1998, 87.

9 Expounded in detail and with long quotations in Gutas 1998, 85–88.

10 Other Arabic texts find no incompatibility between Christianity and philosophical learning; two instances are discussed in Dunlop 1959, 147–48. The first one can be found in the tenth-century biographical dictionary of physicians by Ibn Juljul, born and active in Córdoba, a Muslim state inimical to the Abbasids with whom Byzantium was fighting. Ibn Juljul quotes the narrative of a Christian translator of the late 8th or early 9th century, Yuhannā b. al-Biṭriq (or his son, whom the sources frequently confuse with his

This type of anti-Christian Muslim rhetoric appears to have received a tailor-made Byzantine response in at least one surviving Greek text: the *Life of Kosmas of Maiouma and John of Damascus* written in 842–843 by Michael the Synkellos, a Greek-educated Christian from Jerusalem who spent much of his life in Constantinople and belonged to the circle of patriarch Methodios. The *Life* partly contradicts information that we have from other sources and can be patently ahistorical and factually incorrect, so much so that it later received an official ecclesiastical condemnation.¹¹ This is due not to its author's incompetence but to his intention to serve a wide-ranging agenda that cannot be fully analyzed here. For the sake of the present argument, suffice it to rehearse the beginning of the story: Kosmas is a Byzantine monk from Crete, well-versed in Greek learning, who is captured by Arab pirates and brought to the emir of Damascus, a Muslim by the name of Mansur. At the time of Kosmas' arrival, Mansur's son (the future St John of Damascus) is said to be eight years old and something of an academic prodigy. When it becomes known that Kosmas is extremely learned in the wisdom of the Greeks (*tôn Hellênôn*, the standard term for pagan Greeks), Mansur's son implores his father to allow him to study with the Christian monk. As the boy puts it to his father, he does not want to study only the books of the Saracens but also of the Greeks. The father gives permission for Kosmas to teach John, provided he will not attempt to convert the boy to Christianity. The point of the hagiographer is clear: the wisdom of the pagan Greeks is not to be distinguished from that of the Christians who still speak the same language.

father because their names are similar), recounting his search for the *Politics* of Aristotle in an ancient temple; there he found "a devout monk, very learned and understanding, to whom I made myself agreeable and employed finesse, until he gave me access to the volumes deposited in the temple. I found among them the object of my search, which the Commander of the Faithful instructed me to look for, written in gold. So I returned to the victorious presence [the caliph], possessing what I sought." Although the account has been dismissed as fanciful, it does indicate that Ibn Juljul's tenth-century readers expected learned monks to guard books in ancient temples (possibly converted to Christian temples, although the text does not directly say so). Likewise, the *Kitāb al-dhakhīrah* (*Book of the Treasure of Alexander*), evidently a version of the Arabic Mirror of Princes known as the *Sirr al-asrār* (*Secretum Secretorum* in its medieval Latin translation), which includes a collection of Hermetic and divinatory texts and a preface attributed to the known astrologer Muḥammad b. Khālid. He claims to have found the book in a church in Amorium when that city fell to the Muslims in 838 and to have translated it from Greek and *rūmīyah* (evidently vernacular Greek) at the command of caliph al-Mu'taṣim (r. 833–842).

11 Regarding the historical context for the *Life's* composition, I follow the analysis by Kontouma-Conticello 2010, 15–17.

In the meanwhile, a more positive evaluation of Byzantine literature is under way: Byzantinists are making a greater effort to understand it in its own terms, breaking away from the older approach of judging it as deficient, especially when compared with an idealized ancient Greek literature.¹² As for the junctures in the history of western thought summarized earlier, the current consensus views the period from the 7th to the 9th centuries as less dark than they were previously portrayed. We now believe that literary production did not disappear during this time, only changed in content: it became more religious, which reflected the decline of urban centres (the hubs of 'secular' education in Late Antiquity), the social need for solace from religion in a world of uncertainty, and the new importance of monasteries as centres of literary production.¹³ We are also prepared to accept that most writings by iconoclast authors were lost due to their later condemnation as, for example, the lives of iconoclast saints or the works of the learned Patriarch John the Grammarian.¹⁴ Some of us discern a certain hostility to 'secular learning' in the 7th to the 9th centuries.¹⁵ However, the evidence for this is derived from hagiographical texts and may, in fact, reflect a tension not between different types of education but different models of leadership for men of religion who, especially if they lacked academic training, could derive their spiritual and institutional authority from their life experience and overall personality. At the same time, an important type of literature surviving from this period, the *Erotopokriseis*, couched in question-and-answer form (and therefore seen as geared towards teaching), addresses fields of 'secular' learning such as grammar and syntax, medicine (both practical and philosophically based), Aristotelian logic, music, and law.¹⁶ Further, this period produced not only biblical and patristic manuscripts copied and illustrated at the monastery of Stoudios and perhaps elsewhere,¹⁷ but also two of the oldest surviving manuscripts of Dioscorides' second-century herbal, currently in Naples and Paris (MSS Neapol. gr. 1 and Paris. gr. 2179).¹⁸ Technical treatises have generally been neglected by scholars other than historians of Byzantine science, partly because of the difficulty of dating them precisely: they are generally devoid of references to concrete historical events

12 Summarized by Mullett 2010. See also Holmes 2002.

13 See the arguments and summary of existing literature in Chrysos 2002. On monasteries and literary production, see also Hatlie 2007, 262.

14 Hatlie 2007, 434–435.

15 Hatlie 2007, 435–436.

16 Discussed by Chrysos 2002, 17–18.

17 Overview in Hatlie 2007, 412–419.

18 Mavroudi 2012a. See also Chapter 4 of this volume.

and the stability of their technical language over centuries makes it impossible to date them on the basis of literary style; the only chronological indications left are the earliest authors that they cite and the dates of their earliest surviving manuscripts (generally not earlier than the 10th century and mostly much later).¹⁹ But if Byzantine literary production between the 7th and the 9th centuries continues to be important, as we claim, does the outside world at the time notice? The currently available evidence for at least two fields, medicine and astronomy, suggests that it does.

Byzantine Medicine

Every single one of the Byzantine medical authors who can plausibly be placed between the 7th and the 9th centuries was translated, adapted, or quoted in languages other than Greek, some of them very soon after the time that they were writing. Meletios the Monk, credited with a number of works, including Hippocratic commentaries and a treatise *On the Nature of Man*, was used by John the Exarch, one of the earliest authors in Slavic whose name we know, writing in late ninth- or early tenth-century Bulgaria.²⁰ Paul of Aegina was translated into Latin around the year 800,²¹ while a number of Syriac and

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- 19 The statistics relevant to the manuscript tradition of Paul of Aegina's work provide a measure of how old Greek medical manuscripts generally are (as a rule, later than the 12th century): among approximately seventy manuscripts preserving the whole or parts of Paul of Aegina's work, only five are earlier than the 12th century: one from the 10th and four from the 11th. As repeatedly remarked by modern scholarship, of no ancient author, with the exception of biblical and some patristic works, do we have so many surviving early codices; see Heiberg 1919, 268; Rice 1960–2011, 4:146.
- 20 On the problem of Meletios' dating, see Renehan 1984, 159, pointing out that the latest author who has been identified as a source for Meletios' writings is Maximos the Confessor (d. 662); on the use of Meletios by John the Exarch, see Browning 1991, 2:1069. Accordingly, Meletios can firmly be placed between the 7th and the 9th centuries.
- 21 I accept the date given by Thorndike 1964, 5. According to Baader 1984, 252, "the third book of [Paul's] medical encyclopedia was translated into Vulgar Latin during the sixth century in northern Italy"; this statement is problematic, given that the latest medical authority quoted by Paul is Alexander of Tralleis (d. 605). Yet a different dating for the Latin translation is given by Rice 1960–2011, 4:147: "In the Medieval Latin West [...], *De re medica* was virtually unknown. Book III was translated from the Greek into Latin in southern Italy, probably in the tenth century, but the diffusion of this partial translation was extremely limited. After the twelfth century references to Paul and quotations from *De re medica* that were derived from Latin translations of Arabic medical works made his

Arabic authors from the 9th and 10th centuries quote him in abundance.²² The elusive 'Stephen' (variously designated as the Athenian, the Alexandrian or the astrologer [*mathematikos*]), to whom treatises on medicine, alchemy, and astrology are attributed, is clearly more than one author active between the late 6th and the late 8th century.²³ Stephen's opinion on uroscopy is quoted by the ninth-/tenth-century physician Muḥammad b. Zakarīya al-Rāzī.²⁴ Passages from Paul of Nicaea can be found in a number of Latin medical manuscripts written between the 9th and the 11th centuries.²⁵ The works by Theophilus Protospatharios on uroscopy and by Philaretos on pulses²⁶ (the two most standard diagnostic methods in the medieval period), were included in the *Articella*, the collection of treatises used for medical instruction in Bologna, Paris and elsewhere during the later Middle Ages.²⁷

The emphasis of these authors on practical application has elicited negative evaluations by modern scholars. The same reaction was reserved for the

name increasingly familiar, but western Europe assimilated the work itself, directly and in its entirety, only in the sixteenth century".

- 22 On the meagre biographical information on Paul and a list of his works, see Pormann 2004, 4–8. The idea that he practised and taught in Alexandria before and after the Arabic conquest, found only in the Arabic biographical tradition of the 10th century and frequently repeated afterwards, is somewhat suspect, and a deduction of the Arabic authors. It contributed to the apocryphal narrative of an uninterrupted transmission of medicine 'from Alexandria to Baghdad', on which the modern perception of Byzantine decline and transmission of Greek learning to the Islamic world is also based. On the suspect nature of the 'Alexandria to Baghdad' narrative, see Gutas 1998, 90–93.
- 23 See Wolska-Conus 1989, 5–89.
- 24 Sezgin 1967–2010, 3:161. On the connection between this text by Stephen and a number of Latin and Arabic works, see Dickson 1998, 3–5.
- 25 Earlier scholarship placed Paul of Nicaea between the 7th and the 14th century, with a preference for the 14th (the date of his earliest extant manuscript). He can now be firmly situated between the 7th and the 9th centuries because he quotes Paul of Aegina and his work's textual tradition is evidently based on an uncial archetype; see Bio 1996, 15 and 40. The issue of Paul of Nicaea's Latin *fortuna* is complicated (see Bio 1996, 15–17), and the close correspondences between the Greek and the Latin texts may be attributed to a common source. However, given that Paul of Nicaea's work appears to have been circulating in southern Italy, it is plausible that the Latin translations found in the ninth- to eleventh-century manuscripts depend directly on his text rather than on a common source.
- 26 On the date of Theophilus Protospatharios, see Grimm-Stadelman 2008, 8–42. On the date of Philaretos (possibly ca. 700), see Scarborough 1988, 28. Theophilus Protospatharios relied on one of Philaretos' pulse diagrams, which helps establish a relative chronology; see Pithis 1983, 191.
- 27 Baader 1977–1999, 1: 1069–1070.

Latin tradition that chose to receive Greek works of this kind: for example, modern scholars have complained that the Latin translations of the early medieval period involve not the sophisticated original works of Galen, but simplified Byzantine commentaries on them.²⁸ This is, of course, in concert with the understanding of the early medieval world, both Greek and Latin speaking, as declining after the end of antiquity. More recently, evaluations of early medieval Latin medicine have been more positive, explicitly breaking away from its earlier assessment and indicating a similar shift in how Byzantinists and medieval Latinists view their respective fields of study.²⁹

Islamic Medicine

As for Islamic medicine, its reception of ancient Greek medicine is considered the cornerstone of its further development. Accordingly, it is credited with picking up the mantle of the Classical tradition when it was dropped in Byzantium and western Europe and modern scholars used it to retrieve chapters of ancient Greek medicine not preserved in the surviving Greek manuscripts.³⁰ However, the avenues through which it received ancient Greek medicine was no different from those prevalent in the early medieval Greek and Latin medical traditions: although Galen was by far the most important Greek doctor for Islamic medicine, most influential and diffused became the Arabic translations—not of his original texts, but of compendia addressing a selection among them. This group of compendia is believed to have formed the basis of medical teaching in Alexandria right before the Islamic conquest and is known as the *Summaria Alexandrinorum*.³¹ Similarly, what was known

28 Baader 1984.

29 For a more positive evaluation than Baader's without, however, reference to the translations of Byzantine materials, see Horden 2011.

30 Modern scholarship used Byzantine manuscripts and Byzantine literary culture as a warehouse from which to retrieve Greek antiquity. The importance of using Arabic medical texts and the medieval Arabic translations of ancient Greek texts in order to retrieve ancient medicine is described by Ullmann 1978, 31–40. In order to retrieve ancient Greek medicine from Arabic, one had to assume and assert, like Ullmann does (1978, xi) that “the crossing of the language barrier has left the contents almost completely unchanged”.

31 See Ullmann 1978, 10. The *Summaria Alexandrinorum* as a defined group of texts are not known from Greek manuscripts; the selection, collective name, and designation as products of Alexandrian medical teaching is found for the first time in a work by the ninth-century Edessene Muslim scholar Ishāq b. ‘Alī al-Ruhāwī. During the reign of al-Ma'mūn, this information was enriched with anti-Byzantine details, indicating that the need to

of Hippocratic medicine in Arabic was not so much the original texts of the Hippocratic corpus, but excerpts of Galen's commentaries on them.³² Clearly, medicine in Greek, Latin, and Arabic resorted to compendia of the 'classics' for the same reasons: Galen's original treatises are numerous, lengthy, and contain contradictions; the compendia offered a unified and harmonized approach to Galen, which is particularly challenging to achieve otherwise.³³ Likewise, Paul of Aegina opened his immensely popular *Epitome of medicine* with the statement that his purpose is to offer a summary of the best among earlier medical writings (τῶν ἀρχαίων), the volume of which makes it impossible to memorize; he emphasized that he mostly depended on Oribasius (who had already anthologized and systematized Galen) and added nothing of his own, except for very few things that he found, through experience, to be tried and true.³⁴ This suggests that what Latin and Arabic physicians and translators were interested in was not ancient medicine as such, but the version of it that remained current practice in their contemporary Byzantine world, where they encountered it.³⁵

Byzantine Astronomy

Let us now look at astronomy, a field of knowledge not covered in the simplified approach of the surviving *Erotapokriseis* or, indeed, any treatise known to have been written *in Byzantium* during this period. However, pieces of evidence indicate that astronomy was undeniably studied there. Seventh-century

compile the *Summaria* resulted from the indifference of the Christian emperors for the teaching of medicine, which run the risk of being altogether lost. It was revived by 'Umar, Alexandria's conqueror, and was later transferred to Antioch, Harran, and ultimately Baghdad, where it received a new lease of life due to al-Ma'mūn's royal patronage. This narrative was prolifically repeated by subsequent authors for centuries and was shown to be fictitious by modern scholarship (Gutas 1998, 90–95). In addition, the large number of Arabic manuscripts containing the *Summaria Alexandrinorum* do not always contain the same selection of texts; see Pormann 2008, 11–12. At least one of the Arabic compendia has close correspondences with a text found in a fourteenth-century Greek manuscript; see Pormann 2008, 19–22.

32 Ullmann 1978, 11.

33 Ullmann 1978, 10; Pormann and Savage-Smith 2007, 13–14.

34 Ed. Heiberg 1921, introduction. The introductory text is also quoted in Heiberg 1919, 268.

35 The same applies to Syriac medicine received in the Islamic world: it is a vehicle to recapture not Galen per se, but Syriac medical practice of the day (i.e. the parts of ancient medical practice that remained relevant and current); see Ullmann 1978, 16.

Byzantine astronomy seems to have been stimulated by an official interest in establishing, with perfect exactitude, the calendar of the Paschal cycle and the chronology of world history.³⁶ One of the oldest surviving Greek astronomical manuscripts, the early ninth-century MS Leidensis BPG 78, preserves a collection of texts ultimately connected with the teaching of Stephen of Alexandria at the beginning of the 7th century.³⁷ It also contains several marginal notes dated between 775 and 797/8. This suggests a continuity in Byzantine astronomical teaching from the 7th into the early 9th century, which can be supported by additional evidence: the existence of an eighth-century astronomical codex that we no longer have is proven by the fourteenth-century MS Laurent. gr. 28, 48 which contains a list of emperors ending with Leo III (r. 716–741).³⁸ The lavish Vatican Ptolemy (MS Vat. gr. 1291) was produced during the reign of Leo's son, Constantine V (741–775), who was also interested in alchemy.³⁹ All three manuscripts contain Ptolemy's *Handy Tables*, which provided all the data required in order to calculate the positions of the planets, the positions and eclipses of the Sun and Moon, and the rising and setting of the stars, which suggests an emphasis on astronomy's practical applications:⁴⁰ calendrical and chronological problems, but also astrology—indeed, we know of an astrologer at the Byzantine court in the year 792.⁴¹ Leo the mathematician, who must have been educated around the end of the 8th century and was active during the first half of the 9th, is perhaps the most famous scientist of the Middle Byzantine period.⁴² According to the Byzantine sources, he was invited to become court scientist in Baghdad. Given the limited information on where and how he was educated, one may view him as either a lonely and lofty genius without predecessors, or somebody just inches above his contemporaries who built on an earlier foundation of eighth-century Byzantine science, about which we know very little.⁴³

36 Magdalino 2006, 37.

37 Tihon 1992, 59 and Magdalino 2006, 37.

38 Tihon 1993, 192–193.

39 Wright 1985. On the interest of Constantine V in alchemy, see Mavroudi 2006, 74.

40 On Constantine V's interest in astrology, see Magdalino 2006, 50.

41 Magdalino 2006, 50.

42 For an overview of the primary sources on his accomplishments and reputation, see Katsaros 1993.

43 The episode is discussed in Magdalino 1998. The paucity of evidence on Leo has led some scholars to dismiss the narratives about him in Byzantine sources as 'fairy tales', most recently Gutas 1998, 180. See also Brentjes 2016, based on Nicolaides 2011.

Latin Astronomy

We are likewise poorly informed about Latin astronomy during the 'dark ages'. But what we do know allows us to discern that during this period, Byzantium and at least some parts of Europe where Latin was used as the language of science, were interested in some of the same questions. For example, in sixth- and seventh-century Ireland, as in Byzantium around the same time, an important astronomical pursuit was calendrical calculation (*computus*), even before the Irish were faced with the central problem of the Christian calendar, the celebration of Easter.⁴⁴ The Irish method of calculation originated in Celtic 'folk' astronomy and was based on number, not Greek geometrical astronomy.⁴⁵ By the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 8th century, the work of the Venerable Bede (672–735), one of our main venues for recovering earlier astronomy in Ireland, England, and the Continent, is conversant with both systems. Although we cannot really follow how *computus* developed between the 6th and the 8th century, it is very likely that Greek geometrical astronomy was encouraged (or introduced?) by Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury.⁴⁶ Theodore was born in Greek-speaking Tarsus, seems to have studied in Constantinople, and spent considerable time in Rome before being appointed archbishop of Canterbury at the age of 67, therefore as an intellectually formed and mature man. His installation must have rekindled interest in *computus* in his new homeland because soon thereafter, in 673, he convened the synod of Hertford to discuss a number of reforms, including the proper celebration of Easter.⁴⁷ If, indeed, the presence of Theodore and his entourage in Canterbury introduced *computus* based on Greek geometrical astronomy to England and beyond, it must have reflected current practice in the seventh-century Byzantine empire.⁴⁸

44 This account of Irish *computus* relies on McCluskey 1993.

45 McCluskey 1993, 144–145.

46 His knowledge of *computus* may have been picked up in Constantinople; see Lapidge 1995, 17, and Lapidge, 1980–1998. Cavallo 1995 emphasizes that we do not know enough about where he studied and when, although Greek was indeed the language of his native Tarsus.

47 On the synod of Hertford, see Vollrath 1980–1998.

48 It is impossible to say much more on Latin astronomy because the next, chronologically, substantial sources are Alcuin's correspondence with Charlemagne and astronomical and computistical anthologies composed around the year 809. Alcuin's astronomy is not in the geometrical tradition but is understood as a Pythagorean discipline based on numerical harmonies. More sophisticated texts appeared towards the end of the 9th century; see McCluskey 1993, 152–153.

Contact between Byzantine and Arabic Astronomy

As for contact between Byzantine and Arabic astronomy, two of the most important eighth-century authors writing in Greek on science lived not in the Byzantine empire but the caliphate: the Chalcedonian St John of Damascus (676–749) and the Maronite Theophilos of Edessa, astrologer to caliph al-Mahdī (r. 775–85 AD).⁴⁹ Byzantinists have suggested that during the 8th century, Greek intellectual activity was more intensified among the Christians living in the caliphate than in Byzantium, and that the recovery of the 9th century was the result of drawing from the resources of this cultural periphery.⁵⁰ Yet there is evidence that at least instrument-making was not abandoned in Byzantium: the only published Greek treatise on the construction of a celestial globe was written by the engineer Leontios in the 7th or 8th century.⁵¹ And Byzantine instrument-making of the 8th century elicited the interest of the Arabs: the twelfth-century astronomer Ibn al-Šalāḥ reports having seen a book with the description of a Greek globe, the astronomical data on which yields the year 738 AD for its construction.⁵² It is impossible to know exactly when Ibn al-Šalāḥ's Greek book was translated into Arabic. Paul Magdalino noticed that a number of Greek scholia are based on independent astronomical observations made in Damascus in 829, which is specified by using the regnal year of emperor Theophilos.⁵³ This suggests that they were not copied out of an Arabic source but were made by a Byzantine astronomer in Damascus. It so happens that in 829, Caliph al-Ma'mūn with his team of astronomers and astrologers resided in Damascus, where he received a Byzantine embassy headed by John the Grammarian. A year earlier, in 828, al-Ma'mūn had ordered the preparation of two sets of astronomical observations which he rejected because they presented big discrepancies in the values for the maximum and minimum altitudes of the Sun. In 830, al-Ma'mūn ordered that a new series of observations be carried out from Dayr Murrān,⁵⁴ a Christian monastery on mount Qāsiyūn

49 On the language in which the work was originally written, see Mavroudi 2006, 87–89.

50 This idea was expressed in Mango 1991; the same idea can be found in the remark by Ihor Ševčenko noted in Chrysos 2002, 24.

51 Stevenson 1921, 25, n. 18.

52 Ibn al-Šalāḥ, *Zur Kritik der Koordinatnüberlieferung in Sternkatalog des Almagest*, Kunitazsch 1975, 132 (Arabic) and 72 (German); for dating the coordinates on the globe, see Savage-Smith and Belloli 1985, 15.

53 Magdalino 1998, 209–210.

54 Sovereigns or governors were frequently accommodated in this monastery, which also had a princely residence built nearby; see Sourdel 1960–2002a; and Sourdel 1960–2002b. The role of monasteries as royal and aristocratic retreats in Abbasid society is described

outside Damascus, using a new set of instruments.⁵⁵ Significantly, for caliphs and other Muslim patrons, Christian institutions were a regular source of both Greek manuscripts and individuals competent in the Greek language. The astronomer in charge of the project, Khālīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marwarrūdhī, designed instruments appropriate for the location and carried out successful observations for longer than a year (ca. 832). The project was challenging because his copper and iron instruments would warp and expand.⁵⁶ It is conceivable that the effort to improve Islamic instruments included consultation and comparison with Byzantine instruments, perhaps also scientists. John the Grammarian’s embassy, however, was not the only opportunity for the Arabs to acquaint themselves with Byzantine astronomical practice. Al-Ma’mūn campaigned with his scientists in tow, and we know from the Arabic biographical tradition that his chief astronomer and astrologer, Yaḥyā b. al-Manṣūr, died in Byzantine territory early in the year 830.⁵⁷

Developments in Scholarship

Another important shift in the modern scholarly perception of Byzantium is our understanding of the 11th and 12th centuries. More than a generation ago, scholarship held that Byzantium’s golden period under the Macedonian dynasty ended with the death of Basil II in 1025, while the 11th century ushered in the beginning of the end for the empire militarily, politically and economically, a downward slope on which Byzantium continued throughout the Comnenian period. Work done during the last few decades, especially in Byzantine economic history, now yields a different picture: in spite of territorial contraction, the economy was expanding, the urban centres revitalized, and Byzantium’s international consequence waned only after the death of Manuel I in 1180. Instead of an exception to developments taking place in the rest of the medieval world between the 10th and the 12th centuries, Byzantium is now seen as comfortably fitting within them, and following not its own path of decline but trends that are visible elsewhere in the states that surround it. But if Byzantium is not in a downward slope in the 11th and 12th centuries, does its literature

in the *Kutub al-diyārāt* (*Books of Monasteries*), a ninth- and tenth-century literary genre focusing on their description.

55 Berggren 2007.

56 Bolt 2007.

57 See van Dalen 2007; see also Ibn al-Qifṭī, *Ta’rikh al-ḥukamā’*, Lippert 1903, 357–359. He was buried in Aleppo and his tomb could still be seen in the 13th century.

command the attention usually paid to the cultural products of internationally consequential states? The Arabic and Latin evidence suggests a positive reply.

A Second Greek-Arabic Translation Movement

True, between the middle of the 9th century and the middle of the 10th, Baghdad produced a quantity of translations of Greek philosophical and scientific works that was never repeated at the same scale. But a second translation movement from Greek into Arabic took off exactly when the first one died out. It is the translation of Byzantine legal, liturgical, and patristic texts, produced primarily in Syria as a result of the Byzantine re-conquests of the 9th and 10th centuries and the incorporation of the region of Antioch into the Byzantine state from 969 until 1084. The Crusaders arrived fourteen years after the end of the Byzantine presence in Northern Mesopotamia and encountered a renewed Christian culture and institutions as a result—a fact never discussed at any length in modern scholarship on the Crusades. Important texts of this second translation movement include the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, translated in the year 1009 directly from the Greek original by the Emesene scribe Ibn Saḥqūq;⁵⁸ the *Hexaemeron* of Basil of Caesarea, homilies of John Chrysostom on Genesis, the gospel of Matthew, the gospel of John, and the Letter to the Hebrews; Maximus the Confessor's *Disputation with Pyrrhus*; John of Damascus' *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*; an encomium of Nicholas of Myrrha by Andrew of Crete, all of which were rendered into Arabic by the prolific 'Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl, active around the middle of the 11th century.⁵⁹ The monastic rules of Nikon of the Black Mountain, written around the same time, were translated into Arabic most probably during his lifetime and became a 'classic' of their kind (they were also translated into Slavic).⁶⁰ The importance of Constantinople to the international literary universe of the time is evident from the arrival of scholars from the Muslim lands, who came there to seek learning, fame and fortune. Well-known among them is the physician, astronomer and astrologer Symeon Seth, who translated *Stephanites and Ichnelates* (and perhaps also other texts) from Arabic into Greek.⁶¹ Psellos boasted of how admired he was by a student

58 See Treiger 2005, 2007; Bonmariage & Mouraeau 2011.

59 On his work as translator and original author, see Graf 1944–1953, 2:52–62.

60 On the date, historical context, and afterlife of Nikon's rules, see Allison 2000. On the Arabic translation, see Graf 1944–1953, 2: 64–69.

61 On his career, see Magdalino 2003.

from 'Babylon' (the medieval Greek designation for Cairo).⁶² That these are not empty words is proven by the Constantinopolitan sojourn of Ibn Buṭlān, a Nestorian physician from Baghdad. After visiting Cairo and Antioch, he arrived in Constantinople in 1054; he witnessed the plague that hit the city the same year and was asked by Patriarch Michael Keroularios to compose a treatise on the Eucharist and the use of unleavened bread.⁶³ An autograph of one of his Arabic works indicates that he finished copying it while staying at the "Convent of the divinely appointed emperor Constantine situated outside of Constantinople" in the year 1058. From Constantinople he returned to Syria and died in Byzantine Antioch in 1066.⁶⁴

Further translations from Greek into Arabic prepared during or later than the 11th century are hagiographies of the Metaphrastic recension.⁶⁵ In addition, several translations of canon and civil law from Greek into Arabic were made before the 13th century: in fact, it has been argued that the first phase of these translations pertains to canon law and must have been prepared before 787 because it does not include the second Council of Nicaea;⁶⁶ the second phase, that took place before the 13th century, extended the body of translated texts to include civil law codes, such as the *Ecloga* and the *Procheiros Nomos*.⁶⁷ New translations of canon law (or revision of the old ones with recourse to the Greek text) continued into the Ottoman period, as late as the 18th century.⁶⁸ Byzantine authors on the organization and ritual life of the church that were translated into Arabic (it is impossible to know on which exact date) include

62 On Psellos' student from 'Babylon', see his *Letter to Michael Keroularios*, Criscuolo 1973, 25, 102–110.

63 On the significance of this encounter for Byzantine political and ideological concerns at the time, see Mavroudi 2014.

64 See Schacht & Meyerhof 1937, 61 (on the plague in Constantinople); 65–66 (on the manuscript he copied while in Constantinople); see also Schacht 1960–2002.

65 Graf 1944–1953, 1:491–496.

66 A new chronology of Greek-into-Arabic translations of legal texts needs to be worked out, taking into consideration the following: the distinction between 'canon' and 'civil' law is sharper to modern than to Byzantine eyes; further, the council of 787 was ratified as ecumenical only in 866, when patriarch Photios of Constantinople sent an encyclical letter to the patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem to inform them of its ecumenicity. Into the 11th century, Byzantine-rite Christians in central Asia still recognized only six ecumenical councils; see Parry 2012.

67 Brief overview in Pahlitzsch 2007, 21, with earlier bibliography. On Arabic translations of Greek canon law before the thirteenth century, see Graf 1944–1953, 2:81–82.

68 Graf 1944–1953, 1:561. Overview on canon law 1:556–564.

Theodore of Stoudios (8th–9th century)⁶⁹ and Symeon of Thessaloniki (15th century).⁷⁰ Significantly, the translations of Byzantine canon and civil law codes, like the renderings of Byzantine hymnography into Arabic,⁷¹ were also used by the non-Chalcedonian Christian churches under Muslim rule.

Modern scholars have expressed surprise at how little literary contact between Greek and Latin is in evidence during the 12th century in Crusader lands, where translation from the Arabic, not from the Greek, is much more frequent.⁷² Yet preference for translation from Arabic, even of originally Greek material, is an obvious choice when the translators encounter the texts they will eventually translate in overwhelmingly Arabic-speaking environments. Twelfth-century translators from Greek into Latin are primarily Sicilian, active at the Norman court in Palermo, or Northern Italian, working in both their native towns and Constantinople. The Sicilian archdeacon Henry Aristippus translated the fourth book of Aristotle's *Meteora*, Plato's *Phaedo* and *Meno* (the first medieval translator of a Platonic text), and Diogenes Laertius' lives and doctrines of the ancient philosophers. He also commissioned a translation of Ptolemy's *Almagest* (out of a codex brought from Constantinople). Admiral Eugenius of Palermo is credited with translating into Latin the Prophecy of the Erythrean Sibyl from Greek ('drawn from the treasure of Emperor Manuel') and Ptolemy's *Optics* from Arabic. He also prepared (or commissioned) an edition of the Greek *Stephanites kai Ichneutes*, an originally Sanskrit Mirror of Princes that had been translated from Arabic into Greek by Symeon Seth only a short time earlier.⁷³ Burgundius of Pisa translated the Greek passages of Justinian's *Digest* and the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*; the *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* and the *Fount of Knowledge* by St John of Damascus; Nemesis of Emessa's *On the Nature of Man*; John Chrysostom's ninety homilies on the gospel of John;⁷⁴ about ten works of Galen;⁷⁵ and the parts of the *Geoponika* that pertain to wine-making.⁷⁶ Leo Tuscus translated the liturgy of St Chrysostom at the request of Rainaldus de Monte Catano and the tenth-century work on dream

69 Graf 1944–1953, 1:611–612.

70 Graf 1944–1953, 2: 89.

71 On the use of Byzantine hymnography by non-Chalcedonians between the 7th and the 9th centuries, see Soliman 2007, 22–23, n. 36; see also Dous 1997.

72 For an overview of Latin literary contacts with Greek and other languages in Crusader lands, see Ciggaar 1996, 131–151.

73 Berschin 1988, 233–235.

74 Berschin 1988, 226–231.

75 See Haskins 1960, 208; *Galenus latinus*, Durling & Kudlien 1976–1992.

76 Berschin 1988, 339, n. 89; Buonamici 1908, 1–29. Burgundio's program of translation is clearly driven by the needs of his patrons and his own active search for someone to spon-

interpretation known as the *Oneirocriticon of Achmet*.⁷⁷ Pascal the Roman used the Greek texts of both Artemidorus and the *Oneirocriticon* in order to compose his *Liber thesauri occulti*. He also translated the *Kyranides*, a disputation against the Jews attributed to Anastasius of Sinai, and a life of the Virgin Mary.⁷⁸ Both translators were active in Constantinople.

In 1204, when several Byzantine territories were re-fashioned into Crusader states, new opportunities for translations from Greek into Latin were created. William of Moerbeke, the Flemish Dominican who became Latin bishop of Corinth, learnt Greek on the spot and embarked on a programme of translation of ancient philosophy that made him famous in Europe.⁷⁹ Robert Grosseteste managed to learn Greek in England (we do not know exactly how); his household included two Sicilians, Nicholas Graecus, whose finesse in Greek and Latin is evident from his translation of Aristotle's *De mundo*, and Robertus Graecus, who has not yet been securely connected with any known literary activity.⁸⁰ Grosseteste also had access to John of Basingstoke, who had just returned from service to the duchy of Athens with knowledge of Greek and a collection of Greek books; through him, it seems, Grosseteste procured from Greece a manuscript with the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, the rendering of which into Latin made Grosseteste's name as translator.⁸¹ The degree to which Grosseteste approached Aristotle from within a Byzantine hermeneutical tradition is evident from his translation of the twelfth-century collection of commentaries on *Nicomachean Ethics* commissioned by Anna Comnena to Eustratios of Nicaea and Michael of Ephesus.⁸²

for his projects: he begun translating for the Pisan Pope Eugenius III and after he died Burgundio tried his luck with the Sicilian emperors.

77 Haskins 1960, 215–218.

78 Mavroudi 2006, 84–85. On both translators, Leo Tuscus and Paschal the Roman, see also Mavroudi 2002, 111–119.

79 See McEvoy 2000, 114. Moerbeke translated Aristotle, Proclus, and Archimedes (out of manuscripts that have subsequently disappeared). The diffusion of his translations was vast: they were used for instruction at the University of Paris and were consulted by Thomas Aquinas. On translations from Greek into Latin during the second half of the 13th century, see Fryde 2000, 103–143.

80 Weiss 1951, 211 and n. 1. According to Weiss, “it should be made clear that none of the continental translators ever reached the standards of Nicholas the Greek” (1951, 219).

81 On this translation and its manuscript source, see Mavroudi 2012b, 67; McEvoy 2000, 113–121.

82 On the translation of Byzantine commentaries by Grosseteste, see McEvoy 2000, 119; see also Fisher 2009.

This rapid look at the twelfth- and thirteenth-century translations from Greek into Latin brings us to the argument, presented earlier, that ancient Greek science and philosophy was known in medieval Latin through translations from the Arabic while direct recourse to Greek did not take place until the Renaissance. We now know that this argument was created by Renaissance humanists who sought to dismiss earlier scholastic Aristotelianism.⁸³ Already in 1817, the Orientalist Amable Jourdain, while researching the appearance and influence in Europe of translations of Aristotle from *Arabic*, encountered the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Latin translations of Aristotle from Greek and published excerpts.⁸⁴ Work on the Latin Aristotle carried out or directed by Lorenzo Minio-Paluello in the middle of the 20th century firmly established that “with the exception of the *De coelo*, and part of the *Meteorology* and the *Zoology*, the entire Aristotelian corpus reached the Latin schools from Greek before it did from Arabic”.⁸⁵ More recently, doubts have been cast on the idea that at least certain Greek scientific texts were re-introduced to western Europe through the manuscripts brought there by Byzantine scholars in the 15th century. For example, the traditional view that Ptolemy’s *Geography* was launched in Europe by Manuel Chrysoloras and its 1409 Latin translation by his student Jacobus Angeli has been cast aside by Patrick Gautier Dalché, who has plausibly argued that the *Geography* was not entirely forgotten in Latin scientific culture between the 6th and the 14th centuries.⁸⁶

Further, historians of Islamic science have seriously questioned the idea of its decline after the 11th century. In fact, a number of concepts that eventually came to be considered key for the development of modern European science have been identified in post-11th century Arabic scientific treatises. Examples include the description of pulmonary blood circulation by the Damascene physician Ibn al-Nafīs (d. 1288) which has analogies with Harvey’s (published in 1628); or the models of planetary motion proposed in the 13th and 14th centuries by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and Ibn al-Shāṭir that are very close to those of Copernicus.⁸⁷ In this context, Byzantium has been seen as an occasional transmitter of Islamic science to Europe. For example, more than thirty years ago it was suggested that Copernicus, who could read Greek but not oriental languages, may have become acquainted with Islamic models of planetary

83 On the differences between medieval and humanist philosophy, see Hankins 1998.

84 Jourdain 1843.

85 Berschin 1988, 7–8.

86 Dalché 1999; more recently, Dalché 2009.

87 For a refutation of the idea that Arabic philosophy declined after the 11th century, see Gutas 2002; for the same regarding Islamic astronomy, see Saliba 1997, esp. 113.

motion through a Greek manuscript containing translations of Islamic astronomical texts.⁸⁸

Enough has been said to highlight that 'the Classical tradition' was received by the medieval Arabic and Latin literary cultures hand-in-hand with texts reflecting Byzantium's Christian and Roman traditions: biblical, patristic, hagiographical, liturgical, and legal texts. This is to be expected: translations into Latin are generated and received in a Christian environment.⁸⁹ It is also well-known that the translators of Greek texts into Arabic, either directly from Greek or via Syriac, were, in their overwhelming majority, Christians. This conditioned their intellectual make-up and sometimes even generated public dialogue.⁹⁰ For example, the two greatest translators of the 9th century, Ḥunayn b. Ishāq and Qusṭā b. Lūqā, both wrote treatises to defend their adherence to the Christian faith.⁹¹ In the process of translating, they rendered the ancient pagan originals into versions acceptable, intelligible, and meaningful within their own medieval monotheistic societies. For example, a well-known characteristic of the translations by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq and his circle was to render the ancient gods as either angels or planets.⁹² The transferability of originally Christian notions to a Muslim context is evident from the fact that excerpts from Nemesius' *On the Nature of Man* are quoted (with all the Christian specifics removed) in the alchemical corpus attributed to Jābir b. al-Ḥayyān.⁹³

Ancient philosophy and science present a number of incompatibilities with Judaic, Christian, and Muslim monotheism. For example, Aristotle's universe is eternal and creation from nothing is impossible; God is the cause of motion in the universe but is, himself, unmoved, absorbed in self-contemplation,

88 For an outline of the research on this topic, see Saliba 2006; this article suggests direct transmission to Copernicus from an Arabic source without a Greek intermediary.

89 Of course, translations from Greek into Latin are rarely made in a climate of political cooperation with or emotional attachment to Byzantium; for example, the hereditary dukes of Naples, originally appointed by Byzantium, became great patrons of translations from Greek during a period when their dynasty asserted its political independence from Constantinople; likewise, the Carolingian translations of Greek material are made in a climate of political antagonism with Byzantium.

90 Christian intellectuals could create a niche for themselves in Muslim society, but were also subject to pressures. A famous example is the pressure exercised on Ḥunayn b. Ishāq to spit on the Christian icons, as discussed in Strohmaier 1965.

91 The number could be multiplied; see Samir 1994, 110.

92 Strohmaier 1968; see also the examples regarding the Hippocratic oath in Ullmann 1978, partly repeated in Pormann & Savage-Smith 2007, 32–33.

93 See Wicher (1960–2011), 6:38. There are at least four different renderings of this text in Arabic; the one in question appears to be the earliest, dating from ca. 815.

and completely unaware of anything external to himself.⁹⁴ This contrasts with the monotheistic belief in a universe created out of nothing by a providential God. Successive generations of medieval commentators in various languages worked on bypassing these difficulties. Receiving a pagan text as digested by the Byzantine tradition meant that at least some of its incompatibilities were ironed out. The same applied to translations from Arabic into Greek: in the 10th century, the translation of the *Oneirocriticon* of Achmet from Arabic into Greek re-introduced a theory and practice in the interpretation of dreams already found in Artemidoros, a second-century text read in Byzantium at that time.⁹⁵ Still, a translation from the Arabic was well-received because it re-iterated the already familiar in a simpler linguistic register and discussed angels, Paradise, Hell, and the *tzykanisterion* (the field of a Persian, Arabic, and Byzantine polo game), instead of the pagan gods and the ancient *gymnasia*.⁹⁶

But if the old narrative on the history of western thought is no longer tenable, is it possible to propose something else in its place? Common sense suggests (and modern scholarship has occasionally demonstrated) that medieval intellectuals writing in Greek, Latin, or Arabic turn to 'the Classical tradition' primarily to address their own needs and not out of blind reverence or antiquarianism. The ancient philosophical and scientific texts described a number of fundamental concepts and suggested systems that fit them together to explain, for example, the structure of heaven and earth, the mechanics of planetary motion, and the causes of health and disease. A number of these concepts and systems were organized in voluminous works, many of which were written in Greek in the Roman empire around the end of the 1st and the 2nd century AD: Galen, Ptolemy, Dioscorides, Artemidoros. As already discussed, these are extensive and difficult texts, which required shorter and simplified versions to be put in circulation; yet, as they enshrined the system in its full sophistication, the need to return to them for advanced inquiry remained. For example, in the 12th century the aforementioned Ibn al-Šalāḥ found it necessary to discuss in great detail the differences in the numerical values of the coordinates of the fixed stars that could be detected when comparing with one another the several earlier translations of Ptolemy's *Almagest* from Greek and Syriac into Arabic, including their marginal glosses. He did this in order to expose the mistakes in the transmission of Ptolemy's catalogue of 1,025 fixed stars. Subsequent

94 For an outline of the incompatibilities of Aristotelian philosophy with Christianity, see Grant 2003; on how some of these incompatibilities were treated by the Aristotelian commentators, see Kraye 1990, esp. 339–341.

95 For evidence of its tenth-century circulation, see Mavroudi 2002, 423–424.

96 Mavroudi 2007, 63.

authors used these stars to convey astronomical coordinates, which made them for centuries an indispensable point of reference for astronomy both within and beyond the Islamic world. The fortunes of Dioscorides in Arabic also prove this point: new translations of his botanical work were made not necessarily because the older ones were not available, but in order to update the botanical information and verify anew the identification of the plants.⁹⁷ As late as the 16th century, the Syrian physician Dāwūd al-Anṭākī (d. 1599) composed his voluminous and influential medical compendium based not only on medieval Arabic but also earlier Greek authors; he learnt Greek in order to consult them directly.⁹⁸

Byzantium inherited the knowledge expounded in the texts that belonged to 'the Classical tradition', as well as the texts themselves, by virtue of maintaining a Greek-speaking culture and an institutional (therefore also educational) continuity with the pagan Roman empire. The Latin-, and eventually the Arabic-speaking world as well, also inherited a version of this knowledge and some of the same texts, mediated through translation and adaptation. The reason is that the political entities that used Latin (to the West of Byzantium) and Arabic (to its East) had replaced the Roman empire in the same territory; consequently, out of practical considerations, they had to adopt some of the late Roman intellectual traditions and cultural institutions in order to assert their own legitimacy. The range and resilience of the Graeco-Roman heritage can be aptly illustrated by a mundane example: the fourteenth-century Byzantine description of finger-reckoning by Nikolaos Rhabdas is very close to the one given by the Venerable Bede in the 7th/8th century. The similarity must be due to the currency of such a system in the late Roman period (at the latest) and its continuity in different geographies over centuries.⁹⁹

The systems of thought proposed in antiquity did not necessarily agree with one another: for example, the Pythagorean planetary system hypothesized circular and regular motion of the sun, moon, and five planets, while some thinkers of Pythagorean and Platonic leanings proposed a heliocentric universe; Aristotle and Ptolemy assumed geocentrism, and Ptolemy's planetary system was based on irregular, angular motion. Sometimes, as we have seen for Galen, even propositions by a single author were not entirely consistent.

Since none of the proposed systems solved all problems, the open questions continued to be discussed in antiquity and the Middle Ages. In fact, given that most extant ancient texts survive in medieval manuscripts, their circulation

97 On the Arabic translations of Dioscorides, see Ullmann 2009 and its review in Gutas 2012.

98 Pormann and Savage-Smith 2007, 170.

99 See Williams & Williams 1995, esp. 593.

and discussion in the Middle Ages is the reason why we know about them. Such discussions were sometimes written down as commentaries on older texts, which recent scholarship recognizes as important venues for the expression of new ideas. For example, Ibn al-Haytham (965–1039) proposed what is currently deemed as the most viable system of planetary motion after the Ptolemaic in a work entitled *Doubts on Ptolemy*. Medieval users also adapted and updated the ancient scientific heritage, as the ancient texts themselves occasionally invite users to do.¹⁰⁰

Subsequent generations of medieval scholars keep returning to ‘the Classical tradition’, but not out of reverence for ancient authority, nor because they did not know or could not do any better. It is possible to explain this with a modern equivalent: since the 18th century, humanity has lived in a universe conceived and explained along the principles of Newtonian physics. The introduction of relativity about 100 years ago implies a radical departure from Newtonian cosmology, which, however, continues to serve as the basis on which we understand the world and to be included in academic instruction. We do not think of this as scientific stagnation, only as securing a kind of intellectual continuity that serves practical purposes. By analogy, the continued medieval adherence to, for example, the Ptolemaic astronomical system, does not indicate lack of awareness of its shortcomings; rather, it is motivated by the fact that it delivered practical results and was an integral part of everyday astronomical practice, especially since it provided the basis for the construction of the most ubiquitous medieval and early modern astronomical instrument, the astrolabe.

The evidence examined so far suggests that Byzantium’s contemporaries did not view its literary culture as a warehouse from which to retrieve Greek antiquity intact. They were also interested in its aspects that had to do with Christian culture, Roman institutions and governance, both independently and as packaging of ‘the Classical tradition’—always, of course, in order to service their own needs. For this reason, the objective of Byzantium’s contemporaries when gazing upon Byzantine literary culture ranged from imitation to emulation to antagonism to refutation. Such literary communication (friendly or not) was possible because Byzantium shared with the Islamic and the Latin

100 For example, the second-century astronomer Ptolemy in his *Geography* articulated an open invitation for subsequent generations to revise the data in his work. In a chapter entitled “That it is necessary to follow the most recent researches because of changes in the world over time” (i.5), Ptolemy emphasized that readers must follow “in general the latest reports that we possess, while being on guard for what is and is not plausible in both the exposition of current research and the criticism of earlier researches.” (trans. Berggren & Jones 2000, 63).

Christian world a set of concepts and intellectual traditions that all three had inherited from late antiquity. But exactly this shared background can sometimes obscure for us moderns the degree to which they are interrelated. To give an example: in the introduction to the *Almagest*, Ptolemy revisited Aristotle's division of the theoretical sciences into physics, mathematics, and theology (φυσικόν, μαθηματικόν, θεολογικόν) and declared the superiority of mathematics over the rest. Towards the end of the 13th century, Qutb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (1236–1311), the most prominent student of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (whom we mentioned earlier as proposing a model of planetary motion used by Copernicus), in disagreement with his teacher and following Ptolemy, also considered mathematics instead of physics or theology as the best way to discover the truth.¹⁰¹ A year or two after al-Shirazi's death, Theodore Metochites began his study of astronomy in Constantinople with a Persian-trained teacher.¹⁰² In the first book of his *Stoicheiosis astronomike*, in laying out the overall plan for the work, he also insisted that the mathematical sciences are the only way to the truth.¹⁰³ This is in agreement with one of the important projects of fourteenth-century Latin philosophy, launched from the 1320s onwards at Merton College, Oxford: applying procedures of mathematical reasoning to problems outstanding in Aristotelian physics.¹⁰⁴

If one looks at each tradition in isolation, it is possible to interpret each case as an independent development, since all three had appropriated both Ptolemy and Aristotle. But when all three medieval traditions are investigated in combination, it is possible to catch a glimpse of how they viewed each other's version of the Classical tradition and what role Byzantium may have played in this international exchange of ideas.

101 Ragep 2007, 2:1054.

102 On the Persian training of Metochites' teacher, see Mavroudi 2007, 70 and 73, n. 32. Bydén 2003, 260–62, remains agnostic as to where this teacher had been trained (whether he had studied with somebody who had come from Persia, or had studied in Persia himself); Bydén concludes that the information provided by Metochites on his teacher leads to the general conclusion that Persian astronomy enjoyed prestige in early fourteenth-century Constantinople and was not transmitted exclusively by Chioniades.

103 References and discussion in Bydén 2003, 285.

104 See Jordan 1998.

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A Web of Translations: Planudes in Search of Human Reason

Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides

In his volume *Humanism and the Church Fathers*,¹ Charles L. Stinger reflects on the fact that Byzantine scholars, particularly Planudes and Demetrius Cydones, chose to translate Latin works such as Cicero's *Dream of Scipio* along with Macrobius' *Commentary* on it, Boethius' *On Topical Differences* and *Consolation of Philosophy* and Augustine's *De Trinitate*, when they had access to Porphyry and other Neoplatonists in their original Greek. To explain this choice, I argue that Maximus Planudes translated such works precisely because they transplanted in the West the combined thought of Aristotle and Plato as already discussed by the Neoplatonic philosophers Plotinus and Porphyry. Neoplatonic thinkers had absorbed Aristotelian theses on many issues: Porphyry, for example, accepted Aristotle's division of Reason into higher and lower (despite insisting on the unity of the human soul),² a doctrine which confuses the notion of the triple hypostasis of God. As a translator, Planudes is known for his tendency to interpret the texts that he chooses to translate³ and, especially with regard to Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, 'the decidedly non-literal character' of his translation has been noted in scholarship.⁴ Much like Porphyry who dedicated himself to interpreting Plotinus' obscure writing style⁵ and used to embellish his own expositions with quotations from other authors,⁶ Planudes clearly appreciates the task of the translator as involving exegesis as much as conveying a text into another language.

1 Stinger 1977, 90: '... it is odd that a Byzantine scholar should choose to translate these works when he had access to Porphyry and other neo-Platonists in their original Greek;' cf. Fisher 2003: 78–9 on the motives of Planudes and Holobolos in translating Latin works; on this, also, see n. 20 below.

2 See, for example, Plot. *Enn.* VI.3.28.8–11 discussed in Wagner 2002, 234–235. Also, see Haas 2001, *passim*.

3 See Gigante 1961 on Planudes' translation of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*; also, see Fisher 1990 on his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Fournier 2011, esp. 34–35.

4 Fournier 2011, 34 with n. 13 citing Papathomopoulos 1999, Coeletta 1974, and Pertusi 1951.

5 Crafton 2006, 32–39.

6 Smith 2007, 12–13.

Furthermore, the Neoplatonic approach fitted exceptionally well Planudes' aim of advocating the union of the two Churches under the instructions of Michael VIII,⁷ because it demonstrated that Latin theological thinking emanated from the same tradition as that of the Orthodox Church which could, of course, serve as a first point of reconciliation for the supporters of the union of the Churches.

Here, I will focus particularly on Planudes' translations of Boethius' and Augustine's discussions of aspects of human reason, especially memory, our grasp of the divine trinity, and the *ex nihilo* creation. These instances offer tangible clues of the approach which Planudes employed in translating Latin texts and an introduction to a topic which begs further study.

Planudes, Plotinus, Boethius

Planudes' knowledge of the ancient Greek philosophical tradition was thorough and Plotinus, along with his student Porphyry who published his master's works (given that Plotinus never did), was never far from his thought. Hence, it is not surprising that Planudes introduces his *Vita Boethii* by stating that, in his view, Boethius undertook to explain in Latin many of the doctrines of Porphyry and Aristotle,⁸ acknowledging right from the beginning of his translating venture that the Neoplatonists engaged systematically with the theories of Aristotle. The text is cited below:

[1] Βοήτιος ὁ σοφὸς ἦν μὲν ἐκ τῆς τῶν Τορκουάτων οἰκίας, γέγονε δὲ ἐμπειρότατος τὴν παιδείαν κατ' ἄμφω τὰς διαλέκτους, τὴν τε τῶν Ἑλλήνων φημί καὶ Λατίνων.

[2] "Ὅθεν καὶ πλείστας βίβλους ἐξέδωκεν ἐξηγησάμενος τὴν Πορφυρίου Εἰσαγωγὴν καὶ τὸ Περὶ ἐρμηνείας Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ ἕτερα, φασὶ δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ περὶ τῶν Τοπικῶν ἴδιον βιβλίον συντάξασθαι; γέγονε δὲ καὶ περὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν μαθημάτων ἄριστος.

⁷ Fisher 2003, 79; Wilson 1990, 230.

⁸ Cf. Harris 1976, 15–6 discussing the contribution of Boethius in introducing neoplatonism to Latin Christianity although he did not contribute significantly to neoplatonic thinking *per se*. On the importance of Boethius and Augustine in shaping western theological thought and the main differences between their arguments and those of Byzantine thinkers on the nature of God, see Bradshaw 2006, esp. 332–336.

The wise Boethius descended from the family of the Torquats; he became most familiar with scholarship in both languages, I mean both that of the Greeks and the Latins.

Whence he also published numerous books explaining Porphyry's *Isagoge* and Aristotle's *Peri Hermeneias* and others; they also say that he himself edited the book *Peri Topicon*. And he became excellent also in the rest of the disciplines.⁹

He was, of course, right given that Boethius had translated Porphyry's *Isagoge* in Latin and even refers to Plotinus by name in *De Divisione*, calling him a *gravissimus philosophus* (a most profound philosopher).¹⁰ However, in his grappling with Neoplatonic notions, Boethius offers an example of a western thinker who relied on the authorities of both Plato and Aristotle under the influence of Plotinus.¹¹ It could be even argued in light of the scholarly debate as to the originality of Boethius' views on foresight and free will, as presented in his *Consolation of Philosophy*,¹² that Planudes has already contributed his own opinion, by asserting Boethius' dependence on Plotinus and his recommendation for combining the views of Plato and Aristotle. Planudes' 'restoration' of Boethius' text so as to allude to its philosophical origin may be traced in the following example, where he mentions Plotinus along with Plato in his annotated translation of *Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy*.¹³ He writes:

τοῦ ζῆν ἡμᾶς καὶ βιοῦν εἰς δύο διηρημένον, τοῦ μὲν ἐξ ὅτου καὶ γεγόναμεν καὶ μέχρῃς αὐτοῦ τοῦ τεθνάναι, τοῦ δ' αὖθις ἐκ τεθνεώτων ἡμῶν ἀναβιωσκομένων καὶ ἥκιστα φθειρομένων (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀποθνήσκωμεν αὖθις) ἀνταλλαττόμεθα τὸν φθίνοντα τόνδε βίον τοῦ αἰεὶ ἐστηκότος καί, εἴ γε φαύλως γε ἡμᾶς παρέξομεν καὶ πονηροὺς ἐν τῷ παρόντι, πονηρὰ κάκει μεταδέχεται καὶ μένει τῷ βίῳ μήποτε παυομένῳ, εἴτ' ἀμείνους καὶ χρηστοὺς ἀμείνω καὶ καθὰ δὴ τὸ τρυφᾶν ἡμᾶς ἀκήρατον καὶ μήποτε περαῖνον, οὕτω δὴ καὶ κόλασις τὸν ἴσον ἔχει χρόνον

9 Unacknowledged translations are mine.

10 *De div.* 4.6, 875d. Trans. Suto 2011, 94. For the similarities of Planudes' and Cassiodorus' *Vitae Boethii*, see Megas 1996; also, see Brazinski 2015, 5–6 who argues that Planudes provided an earlier date for Boethius, whom he boldly presented as a Christian, in an attempt to cast him as a 'primary source' in the major theological debates of the time, including the triadic nature of God and the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches. Brazinski 2015, 9, claims that Planudes was 'trying to promote Boethius and explain his importance', rather than offering a translation of his most famous work.

11 Chadwick 1981, 133.

12 McKeon 1979, 710–711, 715; Kirkby 1981, 55–7; Gersh 1986, 694–699; Leftow 1990, 123; Shiel 1990, *passim*; Marenbon 2003, 134; cf. Eliasson 2008, esp. 22.

13 *Sch.*185.13 and 14, s.v. Οὕτως ἔχει. My translation.

ψυχὴν ὁμοῦ καὶ σῶμα ἐνδίκως μετιοῦσα. σῶμα δ' ἐκεῖνο, τὸ καὶ φαύλως δηλονότι βιώσαν καὶ τῇ πονηρᾷ τῇδε δουλεύσαν ψυχῇ ἐπεὶ μὴδ' ὅσιον, ἐτέρου τὰ **κακὰ πεπραχότος**, ἕτερον ἀντὶ τούτου τὰς τίσεις ὑπέχειν, καὶ παραπλήσιον ἂν εἴη, ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἡμαρτηκότος ἐστὶ Πλωτίνος ἢ ἄλλος τις τῶν μὴ τῇ δίκῃ ἐνεχομένων. Καὶ τοίνυν ἡμεῖς ἐξ ἀντιθέσεως ταῦτα Πλάτωνα καὶ Πλωτῖνον τάναντία τῶν ἡμῖν δεδογμένων περὶ ψυχῆς εἰρηκότας.

Our existing and living is divided in two, the time when we were born until the point of death, and the time when, having died and come back to life without deteriorating at all (for we do not die again), we exchange this decaying life with the eternal one. And if we behave meanly and are base in this life, there too one is regarded basely and stays without ending life ever; and if we behave better and are worthy, [one is regarded] in a better manner. And just as living wantonly is total and unending, so punishment lasts the same amount of time, justly releasing the soul and the body together. That the body which has clearly lived wickedly and has thus enslaved the mean soul because it was not pure, although it has done the evil deeds, someone else [the soul] undergoes punishment instead of it, is almost an error of Plato or Plotinus or another of those who are not liable for retribution. Therefore, we say these [things] as a counter-proposition to Plato and Plotinus, the exact opposite to what we believe about the soul.

It is worth noting that while translating Boethius' eloquent description of the relationship between the human body and soul, Planudes' choice of vocabulary (here emphasized in bold) indicates that he has clearly in mind a relevant excerpt on wrongdoing from Plotinus' *Enneads* 3.3.5-33–55 where we read:

“Ὡστε τὰ κακὰ ἐπόμενα εἶναι, ἐξ ἀνάγκης δέ· καὶ γὰρ παρ' ἡμῶν κατ' αἰτίας οὐχ ὑπὸ τῆς προνοίας ἡναγκασμένων, ἀλλ' ἐξ αὐτῶν συναψάντων μὲν τοῖς τῆς προνοίας καὶ ἀπὸ προνοίας ἔργοις, τὸ δὲ ἐφεξῆς συνεῖραι κατὰ βούλησιν ἐκείνης οὐ δυνηθέντων, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τῶν πραξάντων ἢ κατ' ἄλλο τι τῶν ἐν τῷ παντί, μὴδ' αὐτοῦ κατὰ πρόνοιαν **πεπραχότος** ἢ **πεποιηκότος** τι ἐν ἡμῖν πάθος. Οὐ γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ πᾶν προσελθὼν παντί, ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτὸ πρὸς ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο πρὸς ἄλλο· οἷον καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης κάλλος πρὸς μὲν τὸν Πάριν ἄλλο εἰργάζετο, Ἰδομενεὺς δὲ ἔπαθεν οὐ τὸ αὐτό· καὶ ἀκόλαστος ἀκολάστῳ καλὸς καλῶ συμπεσὼν ἄλλο, ὁ δὲ σώφρων καλὸς ἄλλο πρὸς σώφρονα τοιοῦτον· ἢ πρὸς **ἀκόλαστον ἄλλο** ὁ αὐτός, ὁ δ' **ἀκόλαστος** πρὸς αὐτὸν ἄλλο. Καὶ παρὰ μὲν τοῦ ἀκολάστου τὸ πραχθέν οὔτε ὑπὸ προνοίας οὔτε κατὰ πρόνοιαν, τὸ δ' ὑπὸ τοῦ σώφρονος ἔργον οὐχ ὑπὸ προνοίας μὲν, ὅτι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, κατὰ πρόνοιαν δέ· σύμφωνον γὰρ τῷ λόγῳ, ὥσπερ καὶ ὁ ὑγιεινῶς πράξειεν ἂν τις αὐτὸς πράξας κατὰ λόγον τὸν τοῦ ἱατροῦ. Τοῦτο

γὰρ καὶ ὁ ἰατρὸς παρὰ τῆς τέχνης ἐδίδου εἰς τε τὸ ὑγιαίνειν εἰς τε τὸ κάμνον.
 Ὁ δ' ἂν τις μὴ ὑγιαίνειν ποιῇ, αὐτὸς τε ποιεῖ καὶ παρὰ τὴν πρόνοιαν τοῦ ἱατροῦ
 εἰργάσατο.

So the evil deeds are a consequence, but follow from necessity; they come from us (i.e. we cause them), and we are not compelled by providence but we connect them, of our own accord, with the works of providence or works derived from providence, but are not able to link up what follows according to the will of providence but do so according to the will of the people who act or according to something else in the universe, which itself is acting or producing some effect in us in a way not according to the will of providence. For everything does not always produce the same effect when it encounters everything else, but it produces the same effect when it encounters one thing and a different effect when it encounters another; as, for instance, the beauty of Helen produced one effect on Paris but Idomeneus was not affected in the same way; and when one thoroughly dissolute man happens upon another, and both are beautiful, the effect is different from what follows when one chaste beauty meets another; and something different again happens to the chaste beauty when he meets the dissolute man and again something different to the dissolute one when he meets the chaste. And the action which proceeds from the dissolute man is done neither by providence nor according to providence, but what is done by the chaste man is not done by providence, because it is done by the man himself, but is done according to providence; for it is in tune with the rational principle, just as, too what a man might do to promote his health would be his own action according to the rational plan of the doctor. For this is what the doctor prescribed, from the resources of his skill, both in health and in sickness. But whatever anyone does that is unhealthy, he does it himself and it is an act which goes against the providence of the doctor.¹⁴

Plotinus continues by adding that the action which proceeds from the dissolute man is done neither by providence nor according to providence, but what is done by the chaste man, while obviously not done by providence (since it is done by the man himself), is certainly according to providence. To illustrate his point Plotinus uses the example of a man who takes the advice of a doctor for improving his health: the doctor's advice, carried out by the patient, follows the rational principle; but anything unhealthy one may do to himself is against the providence of the doctor. The original comment referred to Boethius' Book

14 Trans. Armstrong 1967, 129, 131.

1.12.5.1,¹⁵ but more clues that Planudes was right in using Plotinian language in his commentary come soon afterwards when in his own text Boethius refers to the ‘illness’ from which his soul suffers—that being loss of memory—while later in Book 4.64.28.1 he develops fully the Plotinian reference to the doctor. In other words, Planudes most probably recognized Plotinus as the source of Boethius’ excerpt and alluded to it by ‘restoring’ the text to its original Plotinian vocabulary, a practice Planudes had systematically exercised in his translations.¹⁶ It is also clear that, throughout his commentary, Planudes addresses his readership directly and, therefore, he feels compelled to guide them to appreciate Boethius’ dependence on Plotinus and his systematic merging of Platonic and Aristotelian concepts.

Regardless of one’s stance on the debate regarding the nature and purpose of Plotinus’ engagement with Aristotle’s ideas about memory, that is, whether Plotinus was trying to challenge or draw on Aristotle’s work, there is no doubt that he was familiar with the relevant Aristotelian theses.¹⁷ Notably, although Plotinus’ ideas are regarded as ‘somewhat similar’ to those of Boethius in modern scholarship,¹⁸ their systematic engagement with the Aristotelian corpus has been often overlooked. Planudes, however, was aware of it and probably tried to hint at this similarity through his use of Plotinian language in his translation and commentary on Boethius. Although our overall appreciation of pre-modern theories/techniques of translation¹⁹ is rather limited, still we may appreciate that in attempting to render Boethius’ Latin in his own cultural context, Planudes opted for a combination of Plotinian and Aristotelian vocabulary which he understood to be integral to Neoplatonic thinking²⁰ but,

15 I cite here Boethius’ text as well as Planudes’ Greek translation of it followed by an English rendering: *Ita est, inquit nam id etiam paulo ante cecinisti hominesque tantum diuinae exsortes curae esse deplorasti; nam de ceteris quin ratione regerentur nihil mouebare.* Οὕτως ἔχει, φησί; τοῦτο γὰρ δὴ καὶ μικρῷ πρόσθεν ἦσας; αὐτό γε μὴν τοῦτο, τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῆς θείας ἀπεσχονισμένους τυγχάνειν προμηθείας, ἐξετραγώδησας; περὶ τῶν ἄλλων δὲ πάντων, ὅτι μὴ τῆς ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ λόγον τυγχάνοιεν κυβερνήσεως, ἥκιστα τὴν γνώμην ἐταλαντεύου. “‘Yes,’ she said; ‘even a little while ago you sang about it, lamenting that only men had no portion in the divine providence; while regarding the rest, you were unshaken in the belief that they were ruled by reason.’” Trans. based on James 1897, 27.

16 Fryde 2000, 144–166; cf. Fournier 2011, 34–35.

17 King 2009, 222–240.

18 Suto 2011, 94 n. 65.

19 Nida 2001, 108–114.

20 Fisher 2003, 96–104, esp. 100, discusses Planudes’ broader scope of choice of texts for translation, unlike his contemporary Holobolos who seems to have chosen only texts suitable for advanced students of rhetoric. Planudes, according to Fisher, found ‘pleasure in the process of translating serious literature from a foreign culture’s language into his

also, a point of convergence between eastern and western theology. Planudes' interest in highlighting the Plotinian origin of Boethius' thought goes a step further than simply translating his words, since he tries to explain (for his readers' sake) Boethius' intellectual background; this practice may be observed several times in his translation and a second example is offered below.

Plotinus revised Plato's notion of duality between the One and the Indefinite Dyad to the tripartite scheme of the One/the Good, the Intellect, and the Soul. His revision is, as expected, influenced by Aristotle, whom he considers as the most proficient expositor of Plato. Hence, in the *Enneades* 1.2.3.27–30 Plotinus discusses speech, which according to Aristotle is a primary manifestation of reason, and its relationship to recollection, through which souls are inclined to virtue and divine truth originating from a source whose substance is goodness. He writes:²¹

Ὡς γὰρ ὁ ἐν φωνῇ λόγος μίμημα τοῦ ἐν ψυχῇ, οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἐν ψυχῇ μίμημα τοῦ ἐν ἐτέρῳ. Ὡς οὖν μεμερισμένος ὁ ἐν προφορᾷ πρὸς τὸν ἐν ψυχῇ, οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἐν ψυχῇ ἐρμηνεὺς ὧν ἐκείνου πρὸς τὸ πρὸ αὐτοῦ.

As the spoken word is an imitation of that in the soul, so the word in the soul is an imitation of that in something else: as the uttered word, then, is broken up into parts as compared with that in the soul, so is that in the soul as compared with that before it, which it interprets.

Again in *Enneades* 5.1.3.8–10 he adds:²²

... ὁ λόγος, εἰκὼν τίς ἐστι νοῦ· οἷον λόγος ὁ ἐν προφορᾷ λόγου τοῦ ἐν ψυχῇ, οὕτω τοι καὶ αὐτὴ λόγος νοῦ καὶ ἡ πᾶσα ἐνέργεια καὶ ἣν προΐεται ζῶν εἰς ἄλλου ὑπόστασιν.

... our discussion has shown it [sc. the soul] to be an image of Intellect; just as thought in its utterance is an image of the thought in soul, so soul itself is the expressed thought of Intellect, and its whole activity, and the life which it sends out to establish another reality.

own' (2003, 103), while his chosen texts were meant to be studied by scholars like himself. Although Fisher does mention that in the preface of his translation of Boethius' *De topicis differentiis* (par.7–9), Holobolos stressed to his Byzantine audience the latter's engagement with the works of Aristotle, she does not develop the argument any further, focusing instead on Aristotle's reputation as a master of rhetoric (2003, 93).

21 Trans. Armstrong 1966, 137.

22 Trans. Armstrong 1984, 19, 21.

Notably, Boethius was familiar with Aristotle's theory of the soul which he rendered in his *Peri Hermeneias*²³ 48.19–21 along similar lines:²⁴ "Aristotle's statement that 'the nouns and the verbs themselves are similar to the thought without composition and division' (16a13–15) refers to what he said already above, that 'what are in a vocal sound are marks of the affections of the soul' (16a3–4). But if they are marks, just as letters bear a likeness to the vocal sounds in them, vocal sounds bear a likeness to thoughts."²⁴ The notion is repeated in Boethius' *Consolatio* 3m9.22–4, the prosaic part of which finishes with a reference to Plato's *Timaeus*. The prayer that follows in the metrical part is also possibly influenced by Plato with its references to sunlight revealed to people in the dark, an allusion to the end of Plato's *Republic* (VII 514a2–517a7) and the famous allegory of the Cave (*Tu cuncta superno / ducis ab exemplo, pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse / mundum mente gerens similique imagine formans. / Perfectasque iubens perfectum absolvere partes*).²⁵ Planudes translated this section as follows:²⁶

ἀενάοιο σὺ πάντα
ἐκ παραδείγματος ἰστᾶς, κάλλιστος μάλα καλὸν
νῶ κόσμον φορέων καὶ ὁμοίῃ εἰκόνι μορφῶν
καὶ μιν ἀνώγων ἄρτιον ἄρτια καὶ μέρη αὐχεῖν.

You make all things follow that supernal pattern. You who are most beautiful bear in your mind a world of beauty, making all in likeness of your image, and bidding the perfect whole to also nourish its parts into perfection.

In his rendering, Planudes chose the word ἄρτιος for *perfectus* (he could, for example, have used τέλειος as he does elsewhere),²⁷ which is repeatedly used by Aristotle as well as Plotinus in his *Enneades* 6.2.21.24 and 6.3.13.3 to describe

23 Modified trans. of Suto 2011, 70 with n. 118.

24 *Quod vero ait nomina ipsa et verba consimilia esse sine compositione vel divisione intellectui, illud designat, quod supra iam dixit, ea quae sunt in voce notas esse animae passionum. Quod si notae sunt, sicut litterae vocum in se similitudinem gerunt, ita voces intellectuum.*

25 Cf. Th. Aquinas 1 *Sent.* 3.2.1 s.c.1: *Omnis bonitas refertur ad bonitatem Dei a qua fluit et cuius similitudinem gerit.*

26 Trans. modified from James 1897, 100.

27 For example, see his translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate* 4.4.7.6; 6.8.9.20–21; 6.10.11.22; 8.8.12.34; 14.7.9.17. On Planudes' interpretative translation of Boethius and his attention to choosing the right Greek word to render the Latin, see Fodor 2004, 203–208.

numbers and their relation to the divine order of the cosmos. Hence, in his translation Planudes is constantly aware of the need to use Aristotelian vocabulary for explaining Platonic notions, very much in the way of Plotinus, whom he clearly wishes to promote as the true model of Boethius.

Again, in demonstrating that Boethius here follows Aristotle (although grappling with an essentially Platonic doctrine), Suto has pointed to this passage where Boethius comments on Aristotle 16a11–13:²⁸

There is a sort of likeness (*quaedam similitudo*), he [*sc* Aristotle] says, between thoughts and spoken words (*voces*); just as there are some simple things (*simplicia*) conceived by means of the reason (*ratio*) of the mind and established in the act of understanding (*intelligentia*) of the mind, in which neither truth nor falsity is found, so it is with spoken words.

Boethius used reason and logic especially in his *De Trinitate* to elucidate the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.²⁹ According to Boethius, “Father, Son and Holy Spirit are substantially predicated of the divinity ... everything therefore that is predicated of the divine substance must be common to the Three.”³⁰ Here too Boethius toys with Aristotle by distinguishing the common perception of mind from the kind possessed by everyone, and that which is appreciated only by the learned.³¹ His obvious appreciation of Aristotle and his conscious interpretation of Platonic ideas through Aristotelian concepts—a tendency first advocated by Plotinus—did not escape Planudes’ attention. Hence, it could be argued that, despite his very particular theological agenda, Planudes’ sensitivity to Boethius’ Neoplatonic vocabulary and its Aristotelian influences led him centuries ago to the same conclusions as held by contemporary scholars.³²

28 PH¹ 41.27–42.24: *Similitudo est, inquit, quaedam inter se intellectuum atque vocum: quemadmodum enim sunt quaedam simplicia quae ratione animi concipiuntur constituunturque intelligentia mentis, in quibus neque veritas ulla neque falsitas invenitur, ita quoque in vocibus est.* Trans. Suto 2011, 71.

29 Grant 2001, 41.

30 See *Utrum pater, Theol.Tract.*33. Trans. Stewart et al. 1973, 17.

31 See *Quomodo substantiae, Theol.Tract.*41.

32 Moreschini 2014, 88; Marenbon 2003, 82–94; Magee 1989, 7–63.

Plotinus, Augustine, Planudes

In this section, I will explore Planudes' translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate* and his understanding of Plotinus as Augustine's source. Once more, what is, in essence, a contemporary scholarly argument seems to have been already suggested by Planudes.

Plotinus, translated into Latin by Marius Victorinus, had an important influence on Augustine, who appreciated the affinity between Platonic philosophy and Christian Scripture.³³ In his *Confessions* 7.9.13 Augustine explains:

... procurasti mihi per quendam hominem ... quosdam platonicorum libros ex graeca lingua in latinam versos, et ibi legi, non quidem his verbis sed hoc idem omnino multis et multiplicibus suaderi rationibus, quod in principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum et deus erat verbum.

[T]hrough a certain man ... you provided me with some Platonic books translated from the Greek into Latin. In them I read—not that the same words were used, but precisely the same doctrine was taught, buttressed by many and various arguments—that *in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and that God was Word*.³⁴

Plotinus commended a spiritual ascent to the One which assumed a God whose being existed as incorporeal and immutable.³⁵ As a result of this thesis, both Plotinus and Augustine found the relationship of the One with the Intellect (understood as the God/Son relationship in Christian theology) difficult to explain, because if the Intellect is created by the One, then surely the One undergoes change, although it is supposed to be unchangeable. To overcome the problem Plotinus employed the Aristotelian distinction of being and becoming, and described the nature of the Dyad (*Enn.* 6.5.2.9–16) as follows:³⁶

Ἐπεὶ γὰρ τὸ μὲν ἐστὶ πεφορημένον καὶ παντοίας δεχόμενον μεταβολὰς καὶ εἰς πάντα τόπον διειλημμένον, ὃ δὴ γένεσιν ἂν προσήκοι ὀνομάζειν, ἀλλ' οὐκ οὐσίαν, τὸ δὲ ὃν αἰεὶ [διειλημμένον], ὡσαύτως κατὰ ταῦτ' ἔχον, οὔτε γινόμενον

33 See, for example, Wassmer 1961 and O'Connell 1963a, 1963b, and 1968; more recently, also see Brown 2000, 86 and Rombs 2006, 24.

34 Trans. Boulding 1997, 175–176.

35 Byers 2015, 180–182.

36 Trans. Armstrong 1988, 329, 331.

οὔτε ἀπολλύμενον οὐδέ τινα χώραν οὐδέ τόπον οὐδέ τινα ἔδραν ἔχον οὐδ' ἐξιόν ποθεν οὐδ' αὖ εἰσιόν εἰς ὅτιοῦν, ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτῷ μένον ...

For since one [nature] is carried about and accepts every kind of change and is continually divided into every place, which it would be appropriate to call becoming, not substance, but the other [nature] is being, always in exactly the same state, neither coming to be nor perishing nor having any space or place or base, nor going out from anywhere nor entering into anything, but remaining in itself ...

Although Augustine owes his breaking free from Manichean materiality to Porphyry and Plotinus,³⁷ yet his use of *tripotens*—obviously adopted from Victorinus' *tres potentiae* or τριδύναμις—as a descriptor of the Trinity was a huge leap toward the formulation of his trinitarian theology. After all, as Ayres reminds us, “in the context of late fourth-century pro-Nicene theology, description of God as *una potentia* had become a standard and central formation.”³⁸ However, the early works of Plotinus (with which Planudes was undoubtedly familiar) sketch out a similar triadic scheme, also found in the *Anonymous Parmenides Commentary* which is now considered as pre-Plotinian: for the intellect to think itself, the thinking must proceed from existence, via life, to that which thinks, and must turn back towards the object of its thought, that is, itself. These three stages are also described as acts (ἐνέργεια) with existence being an act of rest, life that of passing out of existence, and mind an act of turning to itself (14.16–26).³⁹ In the *Enneads* 3.9.13.1–8 Plotinus explains his thesis with reference to Plato as follows:⁴⁰

Νοῦς, φησιν, ὁρᾷ ἐνούσας ἰδέας ἐν τῷ ὃ ἐστι ζῶον· εἶτα διενόηθη, φησίν, ὁ δημιουργός, ἃ ὁ νοῦς ὁρᾷ ἐν τῷ ὃ ἐστι ζῶον, καὶ τόδε τὸ πᾶν ἔχειν. Οὐκοῦν φησιν ἤδη εἶναι τὰ εἶδη πρὸ τοῦ νοῦ, ὅντα δὲ αὐτὰ νοεῖν τὸν νοῦν; Πρῶτον οὖν ἐκεῖνο, λέγω δὲ τὸ ζῶον, ζητητέον εἰ μὴ νοῦς, ἀλλ' ἕτερον νοῦ· τὸ γὰρ θεώμενον νοῦς· τὸ τοίνυν ζῶον αὐτὸ οὐ νοῦς, ἀλλὰ νοητὸν αὐτὸ φήσομεν καὶ τὸν νοῦν ἔξω φήσομεν αὐτοῦ ἃ ὁρᾷ ἔχειν.

37 Ayres 2010, 29; also, Gerber 2012, 30.

38 Ayres 2010, 29; Gerber 2012, 30.

39 Note that from the *Confessions* we know that Augustine eventually rejected the neo-Platonic excessus mentis as an insufficient tool in his attempt to experience God (*Conf.* 7.17).

40 Trans. Armstrong 1967, 407.

“Intellect,” Plato says, “sees the Ideas existing in the real living creature” then, he says, “the Maker planned that, what Intellect sees in the real living creature, this universe too should have.” Does he, then, say that the Forms exist already before Intellect, and that Intellect thinks them when they [already] exist? First of all, then, we must investigate that reality (I mean the living creature), to see if it is not Intellect, but something other than Intellect; for that which contemplates it is Intellect; so we shall say that the living creature is not Intellect, but intelligible, and that Intellect has what it sees outside itself.

Perhaps, then, it is in Plotinus that we should seek the starting point of Augustine’s theory of the inner memory of the intellect, a point which would accord completely with the theological interests of Planudes. Augustine explains his thoughts on the topic in *De Trinitate* 14.7.10.47–52 where we read:

Nam si nos referamus ad interiorem mentis memoriam qua sui meminit et interiorem intelligentiam qua se intellegit et interiorem uoluntatem qua se diligit, ubi haec tria simul sunt et simul semper fuerunt ex quo esse coeperunt siue cogitarentur siue non cogitarentur, videbitur quidem imago illius trinitatis et ad solam memoriam pertinere.

Planudes rendered this locus as follows:⁴¹

Καὶ γὰρ εἴπερ ἡμᾶς ἀνενέγκοιμεν πρὸς τὴν ἐντὸς τοῦ νοῦ μνήμην, καθ’ ἣν ἑαυτοῦ μνημονεύει, καὶ τὴν ἐντὸς νόησιν, καθ’ ἣν ἑαυτὸν νοεῖ, καὶ τὴν ἐντὸς θέλησιν, καθ’ ἣν ἑαυτὸν ἀγαπᾷ, ἔνθα τὰ τρία ταῦτα ὁμοῦ εἰσὶ καὶ ὁμοῦ αἰεὶ γεγόνασιν ἐξ οὗ εἶναι ἤρξαντο, εἴτε διαλογισμῷ διδοῖντο εἴτε μὴ, δοκεῖ μὲν ἡ εἰκὼν τῆς τριάδος ἐκείνης καὶ πρὸς μόνην τὴν μνήμην ἀνήκειν.

If we refer to the inner memory of the intellect, by which it remembers itself, and the inner understanding, by which it understands itself, and the inner will, by which it loves itself—where these three are always together, and always have been since the moment they began, whether they were thought of or not. The image of this trinity will indeed appear to relate even to memory alone.

Planudes is surely familiar with the terms *μνήμη*, *νόησις*, and *θέλησις* in Plotinus, which helps him translate effectively Augustine’s *memoria*, *intelligentia*, and

41 Trans. Haddan 2012, 402, modified.

voluntas. A further clue that he draws on Plotinus' text while translating can be traced in the translation of *interiorem* as ἐντὸς. Although Planudes could have chosen ἐσώτερος, which would additionally retain the comparative sense of the Latin *interior-oris* more accurately, he opts for ἐντὸς, probably influenced by Plotinus' reference to Plato's νοῦς ἐνούσας ἰδέας.⁴² Thus, in his translation Planudes alludes to Augustine's Plotinian source, as well as to the Platonic origin of the concept.

Of course, although Plotinus has a clear hierarchy for the relationship between the One, the Intellect, and the Soul, Augustine makes every effort to embrace the full consubstantiality of Father, Son, and Spirit. Hence, for Augustine 'the Father is God and the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God' (*De Trinitate* 5.8.9).

Quemadmodum enim deus est pater et filius deus est et spiritus sanctus deus est, quod secundum substantiam dici nemo dubitat, non tamen tres deos sed unum deum dicimus eam ipsam praestantissimam trinitatem. Ita magnus pater, magnus filius, magnus et spiritus sanctus; nec tamen tres magni sed unus magnus [...] Et bonus pater, bonus filius, bonus et spiritus sanctus; nec tres boni sed unus bonus de quo dictum est: Nemo bonus nisi unus deus.

Planudes translated the aforementioned excerpt as follows:

Ὁν γὰρ τρόπον Θεός ἐστιν ὁ Πατήρ καὶ ὁ Υἱός Θεός ἐστι καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον Θεός, ὃ κατ' οὐσίαν λέγεσθαι οὐδεὶς ἀμφιβάλλει, οὐ μέντοι τρεῖς θεοὺς ἀλλ' ἓνα Θεὸν λέγομεν αὐτὴν ταύτην τὴν ἀρχικωτάτην Τριάδα. Οὕτω μέγας ὁ Πατήρ, μέγας ὁ Υἱός, μέγα καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· οὐ μέντοι τρεῖς μεγάλοι ἀλλ' εἰς μέγας. [...] Καὶ ἀγαθὸς <Πατήρ, ἀγαθὸς Υἱός, ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐ μέντοι τρεῖς ἀγαθοὶ ἀλλ' εἰς ἀγαθός>, περὶ οὗ εἴρηται· Οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἰς ὁ Θεός.

For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, which no one doubts to be said in respect to substance, yet we do not say that the very supreme Trinity itself is three Gods, but one God. So the Father is great, the Son great, and the Holy Spirit great; yet not three greats, but one great.⁴³[...] And the Father is good, the Son good, and the

42 *Enneades* 2.9.6.17 = *Timaeus* 39E-40A.

43 Trans. Haddan 2012, 238.

Holy Spirit good; yet not three goods, but one good, of whom it is said,
"None is good, save one, that is, God."

Notably, although Augustine cites Mark 10:18 as his source, Planudes could not have missed the similarity of the line with Porphyry's line *In Timaeo* fr.46:

εἰ γὰρ ἀγαθὸς αἶνι ὁ δημιουργός, αἶνι βούλεται τὰ ἀγαθὰ πᾶσιν.

From this point of view, then, it could be argued that the two dogmas differ marginally (again clearly a point that accords with Planudes' goal of highlighting the common philosophical ground for debating Christian dogma both in the East and the West), with the Orthodox clergy perhaps adhering more strictly to Plotinus' hierarchy. Furthermore, Augustine (*Trin.* 12.2.2 and 15.25) differentiated between 'higher' and 'lower' reason, vis-à-vis their respective objects: higher reason is, according to Augustine, concerned with the realm of eternal truth, while lower reason reflects man's preoccupation with corporeal things and temporal activity. In that, he is obviously following Aristotle,⁴⁴ and thus, his approach would again suit Planudes' insistence on Neoplatonic blending of Platonic and Aristotelian theses perfectly.

As Clark notes,⁴⁵ Augustine had read Aristotle's *Categories* at the age of 20, but he found it difficult because it led him to imagine God as a subject with attributes, not as greatness or beauty itself. He was evidently not aware of the Platonist debate on whether the *Categories* was concerned only with human systems of classification, or whether it was applicable to all levels of being. By the time he wrote the *Confessions*, however, Augustine had read some Plotinus and had been profoundly impressed. Plotinus' arguments are evident in the *Confessions*,⁴⁶ but also in *De Trinitate*, I argue, which Planudes would have certainly picked up.⁴⁷ This is probably exemplified already in the introduction of *De Trinitate* which I cite below along with Planudes' translation:⁴⁸

Lecturus haec quae de trinitate disserimus prius oportet ut nouerit stilum nostrum aduersus eorum uigilare calumnias qui fidei contemnentes initium immaturo et peruerso rationis amore falluntur.

44 NE 1166a16–17, 22–23; 1168b35; 1177a17–18.

45 Clark 1995, 18, citing Aug., *Conf.* 4.16.28.

46 For example, *Conf.* 1.3.3–4.4; 1.18.28.

47 Cary 2000, 107.

48 Trans. Haddan 2012, 56.

Δεῖν [εἶναι] φημι τὸν τάδε ἀναγνωσόμενον, ἃ περὶ Τριάδος διαλαμβάνομεν, πρότερον γνῶναι τὸν ἡμέτερον κάλαμον κατὰ τῆς ἐκείνων ἀγρυπνοῦντα συκοφαντίας, οἱ τῶν τῆς πίστεως καταφρονούντες ἀρχῶν τῷ προώρῳ καὶ διεστραμμένῳ τῶν λόγων ἔρωτι ἀπατῶνται.

The following dissertation concerning the Trinity, as the reader ought to be informed, has been written in order to guard against the sophistries of those who disdain to begin with faith, and are deceived by a crude and perverse love of reason.

In my view, Planudes translates on purpose the Latin singular *ratio* as *λόγοι* in the plural because he has Aristotle's *logoi* in mind, and wants his readers also to become aware of Augustine's Aristotelian influences.⁴⁹ A few lines later we read:

Sunt item alii qui secundum animi humani naturam uel affectum de deo sentiunt, si quid sentiunt, et ex hoc errore cum de deo disputant sermoni suo distortas et fallaces regulas figunt.

Ἄλλοι δὲ κατὰ τὴν τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ψυχῆς φύσιν ἢ διάθεσιν περὶ Θεοῦ φρονοῦσιν, εἴ τί ποτε δὴ φρονοῦσι, καὶ ἐκ τῆς πλάνης ταύτης ἐπειδὴν περὶ Θεοῦ διαλέγωνται, διεστραμμένους τῷ ἑαυτῶν λόγῳ καὶ ψευδεῖς πλάττουσι τοὺς κανόνας.

Others, again, frame whatever sentiments they may have concerning God according to the nature or affections of the human mind; and through this error they govern their discourse, in disputing concerning God, by distorted and fallacious rules.

Again, the wording here suggests Aristotle's writings on the affections of the soul, discussed especially in *De Anima* 135–7, but also in the *Categories*, which, as mentioned above, Augustine had read. Thus, once more, Planudes informs his translation with linguistic choices that point to the fact that he has recognized the ultimate Greek sources of the Latin text and wishes to acknowledge them. In doing so, he hopes to help his readers appreciate the similar influences which shaped both Byzantine and western theology.

49 Lang 1992, 6–7.

Plato is also alluded to by Augustine at the start of *De Trinitate*, quoted below, again with Planudes' translation:⁵⁰

Est item aliud hominum genus, eorum qui uniuersam quidem creaturam, quae profecto mutabilis est, nituntur transcendere ut ad incommutabilem substantiam quae deus est erigant intentionem; sed mortalitatis onere praeagrauati cum et uideri uolunt scire quod nesciunt et quod uolunt scire non possunt, praesumptiones opinionum suarum audacius affirmando intercludunt sibimet intelligentiae uias, magis eligentes sententiam suam non corrigere peruersam quam mutare defensam.

Ἔστι γε μὴν ἕτερον γένος ἀνθρώπων, οἱ πᾶσαν μὲν τὴν κτίσιν, ἣ παντάπασι τρεπτὴ πέφυκεν, ὑπεραναβῆναι πειρῶνται ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἀτρεπτον οὐσίαν, ἥπερ ὁ Θεός ἐστιν, ἀναγαγεῖν τὴν διάνοιαν· ἀλλὰ τῷ τῆς ἐπικήρου φύσεως πιεζόμενοι βάρει, ἐπειδὴν δοκεῖν ἐθέλωσιν εἰδέναι ὃ ἀγνοοῦσι καὶ ὃ ἐθέλουσιν εἰδέναι οὐ δύνανται, καὶ τὸ προπετές τῶν οἰκείων ἐννοιῶν τολμηρότερον βεβαιοῦντες τὴν τοῦ νοεῖν ὁδὸν ἑαυτοῖς ἀποκλείουσι, μᾶλλον αἰρούμενοι τὴν ἑαυτῶν διάστροφον δόξαν μὴ διορθοῦν ἢ μεταβαλεῖν ἀπολογησάμενοι.

There is yet a third class that strives indeed to transcend the whole creation, which doubtless is changeable, in order to raise their thought to the unchangeable substance, which is God; but being weighed down by the burden of mortality, whilst they both would seem to know what they do not, and cannot know what they would, preclude themselves from entering the very path of understanding, by an over-bold affirmation of their own presumptuous judgments; choosing rather not to correct their own opinion when it is perverse, than to change that which they have once defended.

In other words, in his translations of Augustine Planudes constantly recalls the vocabulary of both Plato and Aristotle. His ability to sense the Classical sources of Latin theologians and to draw from the original texts in his attempt to translate them — a practice for which he was known⁵¹ — is also exemplified in the case of Augustine's attempt to grapple with the concept of creation *ex nihilo*.

⁵⁰ Trans. Haddan 2012, 57.

⁵¹ See, for example, Blake 1933 and 1934 discussing Planudes' translation of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* where Planudes simply inserts the Platonic original instead of translating Cicero's Latin.

In his *Physics* Aristotle criticized the conclusions of previous thinkers on the nature of things, that ‘nothing at all could either come into existence or pass out of it’,⁵² before adding his own view (191A35–191b3):⁵³

ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὖν αὐτήν ἔλαβον τὴν δόξαν διὰ τὰ εἰρημένα· ἡμεῖς δὲ λέγομεν ὅτι τὸ ἐξ ὄντος ἢ μὴ ὄντος γίνεσθαι, ἢ τὸ μὴ ὄν ἢ τὸ ὄν ποιεῖν τι ἢ πάσχειν ἢ ὁτιοῦν τόδε γίνεσθαι, ἓνα μὲν τρόπον οὐθὲν διαφέρει ἢ τὸ τὸν ἱατρὸν ποιεῖν τι ἢ πάσχειν ἢ ἐξ ἱατροῦ εἶναι τι ἢ γίνεσθαι, ὥστ’ ἐπειδὴ τοῦτο διχῶς λέγεται, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τὸ ἐξ ὄντος καὶ τὸ ὄν ἢ ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν.

Such then is their dogma; but, as for us, we maintain that when we speak of anything ‘coming to be, whether out of existence or non-existence, or of the non-existent or the existent acting or being acted on in any way, or of anything at all becoming this or that,’ one explanation is as follows: it is much the same as saying that a ‘physician’ does or ‘experiences’ something, or that he has ‘become’ (and now is) something that he has ‘turned into,’ instead of remaining a physician. For all these expressions are ambiguous, and this ambiguity is clearly analogous to the ambiguity concealed under our language when we speak of what ‘the existent has turned into,’ or of the existent ‘doing’ this or ‘experiencing’ that.

In *De Trinitate* 1.1 Augustine echoes this view by writing:⁵⁴ “But those who think that God has such power as to have generated himself, is so much the more mistaken, because not only God does not exist in this manner but neither does the spiritual nor the bodily creature; for there is nothing at all that generates its own existence.”⁵⁵

In his translation Planudes renders the last phrase closely following Augustine.⁵⁶ Here, I argue, Planudes translates *res* as ὄντα (and not *pragmata*) once more because he appreciates Augustine’s close reading of his Aristotelian sources. Planudes and his contemporaries could surely appreciate at this point the affinities between Augustine and Aristotle’s analysis of the disagreement

52 191a29–30: οὔτε γίνεσθαι τῶν ὄντων οὐδὲν οὔτε φθείρεσθαι; cf. 191b10–18.

53 Trans. Wicksteed and Cornford 1957, 84–85.

54 Trans. Haddan 2012, 57.

55 *Qui autem putant eius esse potentiae deum ut seipsum ipse genuerit, eo plus errant quod non solum deus ita non est sed nec spiritalis nec corporalis creatura. Nulla enim omnino res est quae se ipsam gignat ut sit.*

56 Οὐδὲν γάρ ἐστι τῶν ὄντων παντάπασιν ὅπερ αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ γεννᾷ ὥστε εἶναι; Planudes, *Αυγουστίνου περί Τριᾶδος* 1.1 (Papathomopoulos, Tsavari, Rigotti 1995, vol. 1).

between the Platonists and Democritus on the atomic nature of natural bodies. In his *On Generation and Corruption* 1.2,⁵⁷ Aristotle sides with Democritus' assertion that natural bodies are composed out of indivisible bodies—in addition, the text cited below bears striking resemblance to Planudes' choice of vocabulary in his translation of Augustine's relevant lines:⁵⁸

Ἀλλὰ μὴν εἰ μηδὲν ἔσται σῶμα μηδὲ μέγεθος, διαίρεσις δ' ἔσται, ἢ ἐκ στιγμῶν ἔσται, καὶ ἀμεγέθη ἐξ ὧν σύγκειται, ἢ οὐδὲν παντάπασιν, ὥστε καὶ γίνοιτο ἐκ μηδενὸς καὶ εἴη συγκείμενον, καὶ τὸ πᾶν δὴ οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ φαινόμενον.

But if no body or magnitude is to be left, and yet division is to take place, the body either will consists of points, and its constituents will be things of no magnitude, or else *it will be absolutely nothing; and so it would come-to-be* and be compounded of nothing, and the whole would be nothing but an illusion.⁵⁹

This appears to be a significant change for Augustine who in his *Confessions* insists that God creates the world *ex nihilo* (12.3.3, 12.7.7 and 12.8.8). In his *De Genesi contra Manicheos* (1.6.10) Augustine tries to smooth out the contradiction:⁶⁰

Et ideo Deus rectissime creditor omnia de nihilo fecisse, quia etiamsi Omnia formata de ista materia facta sunt, haec ipsa materia tamen de omnino nihilo facta est.... Omnipotens autem Deus nulla re adjuvendus erat, quam ipse non fecerat, ut quod volebat effaceret. Si enim ad eas res quas facere volebat, adjuvabat cum aliqua res quam ipse non fecerat, non erat omnipotens: quod sacrilegum est credere.

Therefore, we correctly believe that God made all things from nothing. For, though all formed things were made from this matter, this matter itself was still made from absolutely nothing; ... Almighty God did not have to be helped by anything that he had not made so that he could make what he wanted. For if something that he had not made helped him to make those things he wanted to make, he was not almighty, and that is sacrilegious to believe.

57 Ross 1936, 316a26–30.

58 Augustine was familiar with Democritus' theories; see, for example, his *Letter* 118, pars.12, 27–8, 30–1.

59 Trans. Furley 1955, 179.

60 Trans. Teske 1991, 57–8 (text PL 34.178).

Even allowing for the fact that Augustine's 'formless matter' is not to be confused with his conception of *nihil* ('nothing'), other commentators have still suspected that Augustine's *nihil* is actually 'something', some form of substance, roughly equivalent to the Platonic conception of *hyle*, mainly discussed in his *Timaeus*. O'Connell, for instance,⁶¹ says that Augustine's conception of *nihil*, particularly in his early writings, comes 'uncomfortably close to the Neo-Platonic non-being ($\mu\eta\ \delta\upsilon$)' and the quasi-existence which Plotinus attached to that notion.⁶²

Clearly then Planudes had also picked up the closeness of Augustinian thought to his Plotinian model and was, as always, keen to stress the point. Notably, the Platonic version of the creation *ex nihilo* had also influenced Boethius; in the third book of his *De Consolatione* Boethius has Lady Philosophy arguing that happiness cannot be found in riches, power, honours, offices, etc. Instead, happiness can only be found in that which is perfect and self-sufficient, that is, God Himself. Then Lady Philosophy explains that one must pray, and launches into a beautiful prayer about the creation of the Universe. This creation motif is contrary to Aristotle and similar to Plato's *Timaeus*. Most of all, it is a Judeo-Christian account of creation *ex nihilo*. In addition, in book v pr.1.9 Boethius explains that the *nihil ex nihilo* concept was not intended by the ancients to refer to the origins of the cosmos, but rather dealt with material objects (*de materiali subiecto*).

Given their common interest in Neoplatonic thought and its systematic engagement with Aristotle, Planudes' interest in translating the works of Boethius and Augustine into Greek is obvious. Not only did he have the opportunity to verify for himself the oscillation of Latin thinkers between Plato and Aristotle, an experience which he undoubtedly shared, but his translations highlight the coexistence of Platonic and Aristotelian thinking in Latin theological works, offering important clues to their complementarity. From this point of view, Beck, Gigante, and particularly Stadter were right when speculating that Planudes' purpose in introducing the Latin mindset to his contemporaries was to emphasize how akin eastern and western theological views were.⁶³ But in

61 O'Connell 1968, 187.

62 Rotman 1987, 63, explains further: "St Augustine, though he absorbed the God of Parmenides and Plato and their abhorrence of the void through the neo-Platonist writings of Plotinus and not from Aristotle, assigned an eschatological status to 'nothing' — it was the devil — which neatly Christianises the sort of horrific object Aristotle was at such pains to deny."

63 Beck 1971, 45; Gigante 1961, 105–107; Stadter 1973, 159. Their views are summarized in Fisher 2003, 100 with nn. 70–72.

doing so, Planudes did not wish simply to delve into the art of translation; his ambition was to go beyond the Latin texts, to their Greek sources and their Neoplatonic ideas.⁶⁴

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64 Cf. Brazinski 2015, 1 with nn. 1–2, cites Asztalos 1993 on the importance of Boethius as a transmitter of Aristotelian thought in the west.

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Translating Dorotheus of Gaza: From Gaza to Humanist Europe

Michael Champion

This chapter explores how Byzantine culture represented by Dorotheus of Gaza (c. 500–560/580) was translated into Latin and appropriated by early modern religious writers, and how those appropriations may themselves illuminate Dorotheus' ideas. Carlo Ginzburg has written of the generating power for a certain type of historiography of the 'conviction that a historical phenomenon can become comprehensible only by reconstructing the activities of *all* the persons who participated in it'.¹ While this chapter does not try to reconstruct the activities of all the people who have participated in the Greek writings of Dorotheus of Gaza, it is partly an exercise in thinking through the idea that the translations of a work should be included in its definition as a 'historical phenomenon'. By providing an overview and analysis of Dorotheus' later Latin readers, I aim to map his influence more precisely and draw attention to ways in which his later translators can be said to participate in the historical phenomenon of Dorotheus' text, in the expectation that the translations will cast new light on the text they claimed merely to translate.

My case studies are drawn from translations of and notes on Dorotheus' *Discourses* or *Spiritual Instructions* by his later Latin readers from Benedictine and Jesuit communities, focusing specifically on *Discourse 11*, 'On Cutting off the Passions as Quickly as Possible before They Become a Bad Habit of the Soul'.² I will argue that the later translations helpfully draw attention to aspects of Classical culture in Dorotheus in ways that challenge too easy a separation

1 Ginzburg 1993, 24. I would like to thank the editors and the anonymous reviewer for their helpful comments. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Australian Research Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (CE110001011), which partly funded research related to this chapter, and I thank members of the Centre for their stimulating ideas and conversation.

2 ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΠΟΥΔΑΖΕΙΝ ΤΑΧΕΩΣ ΕΚΚΟΙΤΕΙΝ ΤΑ ΠΑΘΗ ΠΡΟ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΕΞΕΙ ΚΑΚΗ ΓΕΝΕΣΘΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΨΥΧΗΝ. For the text of Dorotheus' various writings, see Regnault & de Préville 2001.

between monastic and Classical education and between monasticism modeled as a school or viewed as a site of spiritual authority.

Given the broad temporal and generic span of this volume, a brief introduction to Dorotheus may prove useful. He entered the monastery at Thawatha, near Gaza, in the first third of the 6th century. Clearly familiar with a wide range of monastic and patristic authors, including Basil, Evagrius and Origen, he also provides early evidence for the spread and use of the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* (*Apophthegmata*).³ Beyond Christianity, he shows direct knowledge of Epictetus (*Mor.*) and Aristotle (*Eth. Nic.*).⁴ There are multiple echoes of aspects of Platonism, Stoicism and Aristotelianism.⁵ Pierre Hadot sees Dorotheus' writings as entirely consistent with the wider project of ancient philosophy conceived as a spiritual exercise.⁶ Resonances with Classical culture are normally taken to be indirect, mediated through earlier Christian writers, but his Classical education is clear in his rhetorical skill and in his knowledge of medicine, which may connect him to Alexandrian scholarship.⁷

Dorotheus writes about his devotion to Classical learning, devotion so strong that he wears himself out and needs to take a bath to recover from the exhaustion caused by his rhetorical studies (10.105).⁸ He continues to see parallels between Classical learning and the life of the monasteries, comparing and explicitly linking the practice, effort and determination required in both domains:

If in the case of non-monastic discourse there is such great desire and heat from devoting oneself to something in one's learning and gaining its habitual disposition, how much more in the case of virtue?⁹

3 On Dorotheus, see Hevelone-Harper 2005, 61–78. On Gazan monasticism more generally, see Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky 2000; Neyt 1974; Neyt 2004.

4 E. g. Dorotheus, *Ep.* 1.182.23–25, 2, 187.14–15, Regnault and de Préville 2001, 494, 502.

5 While it is difficult to prove direct influence, Dorotheus' knowledge of Classical ideas may be more than habituation to the intellectual 'koine' of the empire. For this judgement, see Spanneut 1957, 203.

6 See Hadot 1995, 66–68, 72, 78, 363. Hadot's claim, however, that monasticism was based on a denial of the body and the extirpation of the passions requires re-examination in the case of Dorotheus.

7 On Dorotheus' medical imagery, see Schenkewitz 2013.

8 In Alexandria, the main education complex butted up against the main civic baths, perhaps for similarly exhausted customers; both institutions are at the heart of the late-antique city. For the classrooms in Alexandria, see Derda, Markiewicz, and Wipszycka, 2007, especially the contributions of Haas 2007; Majcherek 2007, and McKenzie 2007.

9 Dorotheus 10.105.25–27, Regnault and de Préville 2001, 338, 340: Εἰ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἔξω λόγου ἐγένετο τοιοῦτος πόθος καὶ τοιαύτη θερμὴ ἐκ τοῦ σχολάσαι τινὰ τῇ ἀναγνώσει καὶ γενέσθαι ἐν ἔξει αὐτῆς, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς;

After entering the monastery, he became close to the ‘Old Men’ of Gaza, John and Barsanuphius, two holy men whose spiritual advice is captured in a corpus of several hundred letters to members of the monastery and lay people from the surrounding region.¹⁰ We learn from those letters that Dorotheus brought a library, including medical works, with him to the monastery (*Epp.* 326–7). In the (near contemporary) *Life of Dositheus, the Disciple of Abba Dorotheus*, we read that Dorotheus ran the infirmary at Thawatha, which was built following a donation from his brother.¹¹ His writings—fourteen instructions, several letters and a short collection of sayings—thus position him within a range of rhetorical, medical, philosophical, ascetic, and monastic discourses that are both typical of ideas with wide currency around the later Roman East and distinctively characteristic of their setting within Palestinian monasticism.

His influence quickly spread. He was widely read in Byzantine monastic circles, and there are over two hundred extant Greek manuscripts of his writings.¹² Approximately twenty-five Arabic manuscripts are extant, the earliest (Sinait. ar. 329, 9th/10th century), predating the extant Greek manuscripts, which start in the 10th century, alongside the Georgian versions, also dating from the end of the 10th century. He was also extensively translated into Russian and Slavonic, following Nilus of Sora’s (1443–1508) immersion in the life of Mount Athos in the 15th century. He was influential within western monasticism.¹³ Since the 16th century, there have also been numerous translations into French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian and English. My focus in this chapter, however, is on how these distinctive ideas were picked up and translated in the experience of Latinate communities about 1000 years after Dorotheus died.¹⁴

Several Latin translations were produced and disseminated in various print editions between the 16th and 18th centuries.¹⁵ Regnault collated multiple

10 For the correspondence (over 800 letters), see the edition of Regnault 1997–2002. Hevelone-Harper has speculated that Dorotheus served John of Gaza, including by carrying correspondence back and forth for him (while Abbot Seridos performed such duties for Barsanuphius) (Hevelone-Harper 2005, 62). There are several letters between Dorotheus and the two old men, pointing to their close connection. For aspects of the correspondence, see Perrone 2004. See also Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky 2006.

11 For the *Life*, see Regnault & de Préville 2001, 122–145.

12 See Regnault’s introduction to Regnault & de Préville 2001, 84–89.

13 See e. g. Egender 2009.

14 Interactions between contemporary French and Spanish translations and those into Latin discussed below may prove significant, but space precludes consideration in this chapter.

15 The following overview is indebted to Regnault 1957 and the introduction in Regnault and de Préville 2001, 84–89.

print versions of substantial Latin translations dating from between 1523 and 1788; other editions quote selections. The earliest Latin manuscript can be found in the library of Monte Cassino, dating from the 11th century, pointing to connections between Benedictine spirituality and Palestinian monasticism, which is also captured in, for example, a quotation from the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* in the Benedictine rule.¹⁶

The Benedictines started things off in the Renaissance, with Hilarion of Verona OSB (c. 1440–1516). His Latin text, probably produced in the 1470s, was the basis for the first Greek-Latin text and also that published by the French Jesuit Fronton du Duc (1558–1624) in his *Bibliothecae Veterum Patrum* of 1624.¹⁷ Fronton du Duc's version in turn was then reprinted repeatedly, sometimes with minor changes, including in Migne's text.¹⁸ Its wide circulation and transmission meant that it was the text of choice for epitomes of the fathers such as that prepared by Philipp Bittner.¹⁹ Another translation and parallel text of Dorotheus (Venice, 1564), influenced by Hilarion's version, was made by Chrysostomus of Calabria (d. 1574), another monk from Monte Cassino.²⁰ This translation also had a long afterlife in Jesuit communities, first through Theophilus Raynaud's (1587–1663) revision.²¹ The final influential Latin translation was that of Balthasar Cordier (1592–1650).²² Cordier's translation includes notes and marginal summaries.

The Latin translators of Dorotheus' writings investigated in this article write Dorotheus into the heart of Humanism and Catholic scholarship of the period. While these connections themselves deserve further investigation, a short overview of the works and circles of Dorotheus' translators shows his works resonating within Humanistic scholarship (Classical and Patristic), and contemporary religious developments and controversies. Beyond Dorotheus, Hilarion of Verona's other translations display an interest in rhetoric. He translated the *Paraphrasis rhetoricae* [= *Ars rhetorica*] of Hermogenes, a translation that circulated with translations of Aristotle by other leading scholars of

16 The manuscript is Bibliotheca Cassinensis 1877, 3: 317–329.

17 For Fronton du Duc and his works, see Sommervögel 1892, 3: 233–249.

18 Morell 1644, 1654; Galland 1778–1788; PG 88.

19 Bittner 1719.

20 Trans. Chrysostomus of Calabria 1564. See also Dorotheus (trans. Chrysostomus) 1616.

21 Dorotheus 1627. Raynaud can be identified by his pseudonym 'Amedaeus Sallyus', whose preface is included in the Lyons edition: Regnault 1957, 143–144. For Raynaud's works, see Sommervögel 1895, 6: 1517–1550. The Lyons edition is no. 4, dated 1626, according to Raynaud's anonymous preface.

22 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646).

the period.²³ His interest in rhetoric led him to translate related works of John of Damascus.²⁴ He dedicated his *Crisias*, a Neo-Latin epic on doomsday and the Antichrist indebted to Vergil, to Cardinal Bessarion in ninety-five Greek hexameters.²⁵ This work may perhaps serve as an icon for his general concerns, and those of his circle, combining an interest in connections between Greek and Latin, Classical and Christian, rhetoric, poetry, and theology. He was also commissioned by Cardinal (and pope for a month) Francesco Tedeschini-Piccolomini (1437/39–1503) to produce a life of Charlemagne.²⁶ The cardinal urged him to improve on Einhard's version, which he considered a *rude opus*, and make it a true product of the enlightenment rather than a relic of the dark ages.²⁷ As Strobl has argued, Hilarion's version demonstrates his connections to circles of Italian Humanism and his engagement with contemporary politics and international relations.²⁸

Dorotheus' other translators were similarly engaged in scholarship and public affairs. The inscription on Chrysostomus' 1564 frontice page 'aut utile, aut iucundum, aut utrumque'²⁹ is based on divisions in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*,³⁰ placing Dorotheus (and his translator) within a humanist education programme. Chrysostomos participated in debates at the Council of Trent, where he represented the Archbishop of Ragusa, while the prolific scholar Fronton du Duc wrote a treatise on the Eucharist against the Huguenot thinker Philippe de Mornay, also positioning his work within Counter Reformation debates. Fronton taught in Jesuit schools, and from 1604 was librarian at the Jesuit Collège de Clermont. In that position he also revised editions of the Greek fathers from the Royal library, producing the works of St John Chrysostom and a highly influential collection of patristic authorities, which was incorporated in de la Bigne's *Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*.³¹ Like Fronton, Balthasar Cordier devoted considerable time to patristic works, especially the *catenae* tradition,

23 See for example Aristotle and Hermogenes 1504.

24 John of Damascus 1515. In this volume Hilarion translated *De preceptis dialectice* and *de robis naturalibus*.

25 See de Smet 1999, 206; Strobl 2002.

26 See Strobl 2016. Tedeschini-Piccolomini (Pius III) commissioned Bernardino Pinturicchio to build the Piccolomini Library in the Siena Duomo, together with its frescoes relating his uncle Pope Pius II, the erstwhile Enea Piccolomini, to his Classical namesake.

27 *inerudite inculta obscura exornes atque illustres*. For Tedeschini-Piccolomini's letter, see Strobl 2010, 75; for discussion, see Strobl 2016, 289–290.

28 Strobl 2016, 298–299.

29 Chrysostomus 1564: 'either useful or pleasing or both'.

30 Arist., *Rhet.* 1.6–7, 1363b–1363b.

31 De la Bigne 1610.

pseudo-Dionysius, and Cyril.³² His dedication of his translation of Dorotheus to the seventh General Superior of the Jesuits, Vincent Carafa (1585–1649), claims that the spirituality of Dorotheus harmonises with, and shaped that of, Saint Ignatius (1491–1556), placing Dorotheus, and the translator himself, at the heart of the Jesuit order.³³ Certainly, several followers of Ignatius ranked Dorotheus highly. For example, early versions of the Rules of the Jesuit order include Dorotheus' writings among a list of twenty-two authors of 'spiritual' works to be taught to novices, and from Madrid, Juan Eusebio Nieremberg (1595–1658), the early Jesuit mystic and scholar, includes Dorotheus on the title page of his "De adoratione in spiritu et veritate" among the 'holy fathers and most spiritual men who make known the whole nucleus of the spiritual life'.³⁴

Therefore the Latin translations of Dorotheus' works signal the value he was seen to have in a range of early modern European communities. Most broadly, Dorotheus' translators share interests in Humanism, translating and demonstrating knowledge of a wide range of Classical authors alongside their work on Dorotheus. Partly within this Humanist environment, they also show an interest in reappropriating Greek sources—exegetical, theological, rhetorical, and philosophical—from the early Church, and they use annotations of Dorotheus' texts to display and recover knowledge of Greek patristics. This focus also harmonises with trends in Counter-Reformation thought. The Latin translations soon found their way into key intellectual and Counter-Reformation centres around Europe. Finally, the development of Ignatian spirituality is also an impetus for the translation of Dorotheus' works. Dorotheus was read and translated in part because he was seen as amenable to these various cultural currents. As we turn now to case studies of their translations and annotations, we will see how these diverse strands of Classical, patristic, Jesuit and Counter-Reformation thought shaped the Latin appropriation of Dorotheus.

Cordier's notes to his translation of Dorotheus' discourses provide an insight into how Dorotheus was understood in early Jesuit humanist communities. 'Headline news' is captured in marginal summaries throughout, and

32 For Cordier and his works, see Sommervögel 1891, 2: 1438–1443.

33 See Cordier 1646 and discussion and extract from Cordier's preface at *Monachisme oriental*, 145. Ignatius' interaction with monks at Monte Casino, which he visited in 1538, makes a plausible connection between the work done there in translating Dorotheus and parallel elements in Ignatius' own writings, as argued in Regnault 1957, 146.

34 in quibus totius spiritualis vitae, imitationis Christi & theologiae mysticae nucleus eruitur ex sanctis patribus, & spiritualissimis viris. Nieremberg 1642. This was quickly translated into English: Nieremberg 1673. Regnault 1957, 147–149, lists several other Jesuits who cite Dorotheus with approval in their spiritual, instructional and medical writings from the late-sixteenth century onwards.

each translation is followed by several pages of notes. The marginal summaries work as an epitome of Dorotheus' argument, highlighting what is taken to be most important; the most significant (for Cordier) of these marginalia are then elaborated in the notes. For *Discourse 11*, 'On Cutting Off the Passions', there are about twenty marginalia, highlighting themes such as Dorotheus' emphasis on paying attention to small spiritual failings since one sin can destroy many goods, the closeness of death, the need for incremental purification, attention to the evil thoughts by which the monk is continually assaulted, the importance of prayer, the formation of a disposition of the soul through practice, and the claim that virtue is natural for humans whereas vice is unnatural. These marginalia are expanded in four extended notes: 1) 'From small beginnings, great evils are born' (ex parvis principiiis magna mala nasci); 2) 'Passions should be excised and repressed while they are still soft' (Passiones adhuc tenera extirpanda et suffocanda); 3) 'Vices must be understood through examining one's conscience, that they may be cured' (Agnoscentia per examen vitia, ut curentur); and 4) Dorotheus' examination of conscience anticipated Ignatius' *examen*.³⁵

In each note, Cordier relates Dorotheus to several thought systems. Explaining Dorotheus' claim that vice springs from small evil, Cordier turns first to Aristotelian arguments that initially small problems can lead to civic unrest, faction, and revolution. *Stasis* arises from small matters;³⁶ small breaches of the law can undermine the constitution;³⁷ and it is not wise for leaders to increase their power base by admitting too many low-born types into the state.³⁸ Dorotheus' concern to form a harmonious community of monks, with its distinctive social structures and tensions, is written back into Classical ideas of state formation and a common civic space, ideas which were influential in early modern political theory. Cordier then cites similar sentiments (through the image of a spark starting a bushfire) in a patristic commentary on the Psalms, joining Classical and Christian traditions.³⁹

The passage from Hilarion then takes us back to the Classical world, this time to Stoic theories of the passions. Christians had drawn on Stoic ideas

35 See Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 220–224). The four notes are marked (a)–(d). Notes (a)–(c) are summarised in the margins with the Latin text I have quoted. Note (d) does not have a marginal summary; its first line and extended argument links Ignatius to Dorotheus explicitly: *Iuxta hoc Dorothei praeceptum S.P.N. Ignatius duplex quotidie examen conscientiae nobis praecepit....* For an investigation of Dorotheus in the thought of Ignatius, see Hainthaler 2005.

36 Aristotle, *Politics* [*Pol.*] 5.1303b18 (Ross 1957, 153).

37 Aristotle, *Pol.* 5.1307b32 (Ross 1957, 165).

38 Aristotle, *Pol.* 8.1319b18 (Ross 1957, 199). Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 220–221).

39 Hilarion, in *Psal.* 136. See Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 221).

(well before Dorotheus) when thinking about how small inclinations can lead people to sin. Stoic ‘first movements’ (*propatheia*/primus motus/principia proludentia affectibus) were turned by early Christian writers into potential vices rather than potential emotions.⁴⁰ There was a movement, excellently charted by Richard Sorabji, from ‘Stoic agitation to Christian temptation’.⁴¹ As pre-emotions were assimilated to vices, *pathos*—passion—became a synonym for vice, and the emotions became not merely impulses but temptations that, if not checked, caused the sinner to sin. Cordier assumes this line of thinking in his use of Seneca, and medicalises the passions, thinking of them as a sickness that needed to be cured (see further below). Finally, Seneca and Classical and late-antique medical writers are also quoted to provide a firm foundation for the Ignatian emphasis on the examination of one’s conscience (terms not used by Dorotheus).⁴² The section concludes with several references to Ignatius himself, which are intended to demonstrate Ignatius’ debt to Dorotheus. Through his notes, Cordier writes Dorotheus into narratives of Aristotelian politics and virtue ethics, Stoic theories of the passions, medical theory, and Ignatian spirituality.

Such themes, especially the medical reading of the passions, also emerge in the different Latin translations themselves. Early in *Discourse II*, Dorotheus argues that Christ is an experienced doctor of souls who can cut off the passions in the believer before they become too damaging. His Greek is as follows:⁴³

‘Ὁ Χριστὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ ἰατρὸς τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν, καὶ πάντα γινώσκει καὶ ἀρμόδιον ἐκάστω πάθει παρέχει τὸ φάρμακον· οἷόν τι λέγω. Τῇ κενοδοξίᾳ τὰς περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης ἐντολάς, τῇ φιληδονίᾳ τὰς περὶ ἐγκρατείας, τῇ φιλαργυρίᾳ τὰς περὶ ἐλεημοσύνης, καὶ ἅπαξ ἀπλῶς ἕκαστον πάθος ἔχει φάρμακον τὴν ἀρμόζουσαν αὐτῷ ἐντολήν· ὥστε ὁ ἰατρὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ἄπειρος. Ἄλλ’ οὐδὲ πάλιν τὰ φάρμακα παλαιὰ ὄντα οὐκ ἐνεργοῦσιν. Αἱ ἐντολαὶ γὰρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ οὐδέποτε παλαιοῦνται· ἀλλ’ ὅσον ἐνεργοῦνται, τοσοῦτον ἀνανεοῦνται. Οὐκοῦν τῇ ὑγείᾳ τῆς ψυχῆς οὐδὲν ἐστιν τὸ ἐμποδίζον, εἰ μὴ μόνον ἡ ἀταξία αὐτῆς.

The 1646 Latin version of Balthasar Cordier has a fairly literal rendering, as is characteristic of his translation method:⁴⁴

40 Seneca *De Ira* II, 1–4 (Hermes 1923, 72–75); Aulus Gellius *NA* XIX 1, 14–21 (Hosius 1903, 259–260), tracing the doctrine to Epictetus and Chrysippus.

41 See Sorabji 2000.

42 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 223).

43 Dorotheus II.113.23–33 (Regnault and de Préville 2001, 356, 358).

44 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 207–208).

Nam Christus animarum medicus est, qui & omnia novit, & unicuique passioni convenientem exhibuit medicinam. Exempli causa: vanae gloriae praecepta de humilitate, luxuriae continentiam, avaritiae eleemosynam apposuit, & absolute loquendo quaelibet passio pro medicina habet praeceptum sibi accomodatum. Itaque medicus non est imperitus. Sed neque rursus medicinae quod rancidulae sint, vim suam amiserunt. Christi enim praecepta numquam veterascunt, sed quo magis exercentur, eo magis renovantur. Nihil igitur impedimento est saluti animae, nisi sola ipsius inordinatio.

In this translation, Cordier sticks closely to the Greek. Passio translates πάθος, but Dorotheus' medical imagery is captured by consistent use of 'medicina' to translate φάρμακον and underscored by the use of the cognate 'medicus' to translate ἰατρός.

The earlier Latin translation of Hilarion (in Fronton du Duc's edition) has:⁴⁵

Christus namque animarum nostrarum medicus est, isque novit omnia, et unicuique languori et morbo accommodatum donat antidotum. Nam exempli gratia: inani gloriae humilitatis praecepta opposuit; luxuriae continentiam: avaritiae eleemosynam: & ut concludam breviter, unicuique passioni medicinam dedit et accommodatissimum remedium: ita ut ne quicquam medicus imperitus queat iudicari. Sed neque etiam rancidulae sunt medicinae, ut non queant operari virtutem suam. Christi enim praecepta nunquam invertantur: sed quo magis exercentur, eo magis renovantur. Neque valetudini animae quicquam est quod obstat aut impedimento sit, nisi cum ipsa sese minus disposuerit.

We may also compare the 1564/1616 versions of Chrysostomus of Calabria:⁴⁶

Christus enim animarum nostraru(m) est medicus, qui cum omnia norit, nullus est morbus, nulla aegritudo, cui non accommodatissima pharmaca exhibeat. Et ut exempli gratia quid dicamus, caenodoxiae, seu inani gloriae, humilitatis, & animi modestiae praecepta elargitur. Voluptati & luxuriae, temperatiam ac continentia(m). Avaritiae, eleemosinam, veluti quodam antidotum opponit. Et, ut simpliciter atque uno verbo dicam, omnibus languoribus, & morboris affectibus accommodatissimas prae-

45 Dorotheus (trans. Hilarion 1610, 448).

46 Dorotheus (trans. Chrysostomus 1564, 112v); Dorotheus (trans. Chrysostomus 1616, 152–153).

ceptorum suorum medelas apposuit. Quare non (in)expers, & ignarus medendi noster medicus est. Neque etiam rancidae sunt, aut vetustate corruptae medelae, ut vim suam habere, & exercere non possint. Nam Christi praecepta, nulla vetustate minuuntur, sed quo magis exercentur, eo magis ac magis renovantur. Nihil igitur impedimento est saluti animae nostrae, nisi dissoluta eius & inordinata temeritas.

This passage is typical of the relationship between Hilarion and Chrysostomus. The latter has a (perhaps excessive) predilection for doublets; his translation is clearly dependent on Hilarion's and often builds on his model by multiplying words or phrases by two. The strongest departure from the Greek in both is translating πάθος as *languor et morbus* [*affectio*] (sickness and weakness) (where Cordier's generally more literal translation sticks throughout to the more common *passio*).⁴⁷ Dorotheus has, of course, been working with a medical image, which may have suggested this reading, but he is more simply understood here as defining *pathos* more generally than 'disease'. Both Hilarion and Chrysostomus, however, insist on a medical interpretation, and Cordier also limits πάθος to *medicina*. This reading is strengthened, in Chrysostomus, by the connotations of physical disease in the term *affectio*, which were gaining ground by the early modern period.⁴⁸

One thing several Jesuits took from Dorotheus was his medical imagery. Dorotheus is quoted twice in Philipp Bittner's *Epitome* of the church fathers,⁴⁹ once under the heading 'Christus, medicus' (and once under the key Jesuit term 'conscientia'). In Cordier's notes (discussed above) to a slightly later passage in this same spiritual instruction, where Dorotheus speaks of the importance of constantly looking out for new passions and the danger of sin (νεαρά τὰ πάθη; ἀμαρτάνω), Cordier translates Dorotheus' ideas into medical language framed by Ignatian spirituality. He equates Dorotheus' concept of spiritual endurance with Ignatian spiritual exercises (examinandi conscientiam), and then immediately frames the examination of conscience within medical discourses. Dorotheus' concept of sin is thereby understood as a pathology. Cordier quotes the fifth-century bishop of Ravenna, Peter Chrysologus (406–450), with approval: si vis curam, agnosce languorem (*Serm.* 30).⁵⁰

Chrysologus' quote is placed alongside the famous (and well-translated in the Latin West) sixth-century doctor Alexander of Tralles (9.1: ὁρῆς θεραπείας

47 Gesenius 1835 loc. cit. has *languor* as a synonym for *morbus*.

48 See Champion et al. 2016.

49 Bittner 1719, 253, 316.

50 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 223).

πηδάλιον ἢ διάγνωσις [‘diagnosis is the rudder of right treatment’]).⁵¹ Similarly, in a note to an earlier discourse, Cordier comments on Dorotheus’ Aristotelian claim that virtue is the middle path between excess and defect, but translates these psychological or virtue terms into a (differently Aristotelian) physical analogy: ‘for what is healthy in the body is virtue in the mind, as Aristotle taught’.⁵² He also cites a passage from Hippocrates on the medical dangers of any physical excess or defect.⁵³ In these texts, then, passion is read as physical sickness, and is cast in medical terms which go beyond Dorotheus’ use of the metaphor, even as it is partly motivated by it.

The medicalised, material, and physical reading of Dorotheus on the passions fits into a wider narrative in the history of ‘emotions’.⁵⁴ It is also congruent with contemporary Counter-Reformation debates about salvation and justification. *Morbus* and *languor* are found together, for example, in Robert Bellarmine, S.J. (1542–1621), who takes them as synonyms (*morbo, seu languori*) of the illness of human nature arising from its material condition (*ex conditione materiae*).⁵⁵ Cordier’s note on passion, sickness, and medicine concludes with an argument about salvation by grace through the blood of the lamb (drawing on Gregory of Nyssa) in a similar fashion to arguments put by Bellarmine when he is speaking of the *morbus et languor* of the human *conditio materiae*. Here again, the medical terms replace ‘passion’ more generally understood (and variations on the phrase *passio naturae* are common in patristic literature), but now it is salvation which is figured in medical terms. Originally morally neutral passions have moved, by this stage, into the domain of sin, and, as passion became medicalised, analogies between sin and disease seem increasingly natural.

I am not arguing that these later translations are deliberately (or merely) stretching Dorotheus’ meaning. Clearly, Dorotheus was fond of medical imagery. His tendency to use such imagery is partly a function of his own interests and his medical education and partly sits within a well-established biblical and patristic tradition of medical metaphors for salvation. But in associating Dorotheus with Alexander of Tralles and emphasising the potential medical valency of Dorotheus’ language and metaphors, his later translators do bring to the surface meanings that are at times less clearly foregrounded in the original.

51 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 223).

52 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 206).

53 Dorotheus (trans. Cordier 1646, 206).

54 For useful historical overviews, see Dixon 2003 and 2006.

55 Bellarmine 1619, 22 [= *De gratia primi homini cap. 5*]: *morbo, seu languori naturae humanae, qui ex conditione materiae oriebatur*.

It is sometimes claimed, in the manner of the quote from Ginzburg with which I began, that future readers—translators, philosophers, and historians—‘participate’ in the event of the past they are attempting to understand, and that therefore the future is a component of the historical events historians attempt to understand. In such a view, the history of translation and interpretation of late-antique and Byzantine texts is itself important for the interpretation of Late Antiquity and Byzantium. In the case of translations of Dorotheus, his Latin translators may be able to see more clearly in some areas than we are now able. What they see in Dorotheus is a thinker intimately connected to Classical philosophical and medical discourses, who also harmonises with strands of patristic exegesis, asceticism, and ethics. Perhaps they make Dorotheus in their own image, to a degree, especially in making him into a proto-Ignatian spiritual director. And we may not follow them so far in associating Dorotheus with Aristotelian political, medical, and virtue theory, for example. But even here, there may be something that these translators can say to us today. Broadly speaking, there have been two schools of interpretation of monasticism in Gaza: it has been seen as a place for the development and maintenance of spiritual authority, or taken to be a distinctive ‘school’, notwithstanding the excellent recent work of Samuel Rubenson and his team which has charted important links between Classical *paideia* and monastic education.⁵⁶ We have noted that Dorotheus himself saw a connection with the effort, desire, and cultivation of virtue required in both rhetorical and monastic education.⁵⁷ Certainly, education understood as the cultivation of virtue unites Classical rhetorical, philosophical, and monastic education with the spiritual and intellectual training of the monks, humanists, and Jesuit novices for whom Latin translations of Dorotheus’ *Instructions* were made. One thing the Latin translators suggest is that Rubenson’s team are on the right track in minimising the differences between Classical and monastic education. In drawing attention to the material, medical, and philosophical foundations for regimes of spiritual authority, they also suggest that the ‘school’ model for monasticism in Gaza should be linked to, rather than contrasted with, studies of spiritual direction and authority.

56 See the articles in Rubenson and Vinzent 2013. See also Rubenson 2012. The most significant work on the Gazan monasteries as ‘schools’ is Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky 2006. See Champion forthcoming for more detailed comments on monastic *paideia* in Dorotheus’ writings, and its connection to the Classical schools.

57 Dorotheus 10.105, Regnault and de Préville 2001, 338–340.

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The Translation of Constantinople from Byzantine to Ottoman, as Revealed by the Lorck Prospect of the City

Nigel Westbrook and Rene Van Meeuwen

The city of Constantinople, following its conquest and occupation by the Ottoman sultan Mehmet II in 1453, underwent an urban revival. An extensive building programme commenced in his reign, and was dramatically increased during that of his great-grandson, Süleyman the Magnificent. Constantinople developed in three centres, separated by water. On the European side, west of the Bosphorus Strait, there were two settlements—the historic core, the site of ancient Byzantium, occupying the peninsula south of the waterway of the Golden Horn, and to the north of the Golden Horn, the walled European trading colony of Pera, or Galata. On the ‘Asian’ side, to the east of the Bosphorus, lay the settlement of Üsküdar, the site of ancient Chrysopolis, across the Bosphorus Strait. The Prospect of Constantinople, drawn around 1562 by the Danish artist Melchior Lorck, depicts the Constantinople peninsula, as viewed from Pera (Figure 10.1). The skyline is dominated by the great Süleymaniye and Fatih mosques among many others, while to the left, the Topkapı Palace rises on what had been the acropolis of Byzantium, then from the 5th century probably the Forum of Leo. It appears, on the surface, that at this time the city retained very little of its Byzantine past.

It will be argued, however, that the Prospect, the most accurate graphical record of the city at that time, can tell us a great deal about the pre-Ottoman city, while allegorizing the early modern cultural exchange between East and West. Extending the planimetric analysis of Wulzinger (1932), in this chapter we utilize our 3D digital analysis to identify elements of Lorck’s drawing in relation to a virtual topography, and thus to reconstruct localized sections of the sixteenth-century city, including otherwise unknown topographical locations and structures known only through textual references. We further argue for a less drastic transformation of the post-Conquest city than the Prospect may initially suggest.

The theme of ‘translation’ raises a methodological question when applied to material culture: where cultural influences can be detected, what was the intentionality underlying such translations of motif or method? Here, the question

is investigated: to what extent did the Byzantine heritage of Constantinople impact upon and influence the post-Conquest Ottoman city? Should we characterize this transformative period as one of relative continuity—a translation, or discontinuity—an annihilation or *tabula rasa*? The Prospect, almost 11.5 metres long and made in 21 sheets—each probably constructed using a viewing device similar to the grid described and portrayed by Albrecht Dürer in his treatise on perspective of 1525¹—describes a city comprised of a composite of Byzantine and Ottoman structures, and anonymous buildings that may be either. Structures may have been adapted, or have adopted typologies that were preexistent to the conquest. In this respect, the theme of translation and influence offers the opportunity to revisit previous research on the Byzantine legacy in Ottoman architecture² and on transformations in the urban topography during this period.³ Is it a question of intentional citation, or of what Bourdieu has characterized as ‘habitus’, a set of more or less unconscious, or internalized, practices of everyday life?⁴

The Prospect of Constantinople

The sixteenth-century Prospect of Constantinople (Figure 10.2), drawn by the Danish artist Melchior Lorck, and possessed by the University of Leiden since 1598,⁵ is a uniquely valuable and detailed depiction of the urban skyline on the south-western side of the Golden Horn in Istanbul, during the reign of *Kanunî* Sultan Süleyman (‘the Magnificent’).⁶ Although the Prospect is annotated with the date of 1559, it was rather a later compilation (in, or later than, 1562) of site sketches executed by the artist during his residence in the city (1555–c.1560) as a member of the retinue of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (Bousbecque), the

1 Dürer 1525.

2 Erzen 1988; Necipoğlu 2005; Morçoç 2009. By ‘Ottoman’ we mean that period of Turkic architecture beginning in the early 14th century in Anatolia, and characterized by a cultural exchange with Persia and the West, notably the Byzantine legacy. Thus there developed an internalized spatial form in both secular and religious structures, reaching its zenith in the works of Koca Mi‘mâr Sinân Ağa (c. 1490–1588), whose masterworks are the Selimiye mosque in Edirne, and the Süleymaniye mosque in Istanbul.

3 Cerasi 2005.

4 Bourdieu 1967; Nille 2013.

5 The Leiden University library catalogue lists the Prospect (item PK-P-BPL 1758) as the gift of Nicolaes van der Wiele to the University Library on 11 August 1598 and suggests that Van der Wiele possibly acquired the Prospect from his father-in-law Janus Dousa (Van der Does).

6 Westbrook et al. 2010.

ambassador of the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand I. Lorck is thought to have composed the Prospect after his return to Vienna.⁷ Lorck's Prospect presents a continuous view of the northern flank of the Constantinople peninsula, as viewed from the northern shore of the Golden Horn.

The Constantinople Prospect is also a significant document in the early modern cultural exchange between East and West, not least because of the self-conscious way in which Lorck represents such exchange. He composed his self-portrait (Figure 10.3), posing with powerful-looking, turbaned Turk on his right, and possibly originally with a matching figure to his left, while the sultan's imperial barge was depicted sailing on the Golden Horn together with those of the Austrian and Persian ambassadors, and references to Byzantine monuments float over a sea of Ottoman buildings. Considering the relatively recent conquest of the city by Mehmet II in 1453,⁸ there do not appear to be many traces of the former Byzantine city and its architecture, aside from the spectacle of the walls themselves, reinforced under Ottoman rule, and the great bulk of Hagia Sophia.⁹ Its conversion into a mosque, made apparent by the brace of minarets, serves only to underline the transformation of the city.¹⁰

Continuity and Discontinuity after the Conquest

The urban layout of Istanbul in the late 16th century, the capital of an empire at the peak of its power, constituted through its monuments and urban spaces what Kafescioğlu has recently interpreted as the 'resignification of Constantinople'—the re-inscription of Istanbul as an Ottoman capital. Similarly, Necipoğlu has described the urban transformation as "the symbolic

7 Lorck's Prospect is entitled 'Byzantium sive Constantineopolis,' adapted from the Vavassore bird's-eye view of c. 1540. Fischer gives Lorck's date of arrival in Constantinople as before 1556, and his date of departure as 1559–1560. He was in Vienna by 1560, whereas Busbecq's embassy ended in 1562. The final drawing was therefore made in or after 1560. On dating: Fischer 2009, 1:91–106. For Lorck's account of his period in Istanbul see Lorck 1574, Fischer 2009, 3:15. For the account of the Holy Roman Imperial ambassador Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq's time in Istanbul see Forster 1968. Lorck completed several views from the residence of the Holy Roman Imperial embassy, the Elçi Han, which Fischer locates immediately south of Constantine's Column, or Çemberlitaş, and south-east of the Atik Ali Pasha mosque and its no longer extant *medrese* (school).

8 Mehmet II = Fatih Sultan Mehmet (Sultan Mehmet 'the Conqueror').

9 A missing sheet section prevents us from seeing whether the ruins of the Great Palace of the lost Byzantine Emperors were still visible at this time.

10 Kafescioğlu, 2009, 18.

refounding" of the city.¹¹ Indeed, scholars have emphasized the difference between the Byzantine and Ottoman city. Guidoni, for example, argues that the siting of the principal mosques of Istanbul played a determining role in constructing the visual appearance of the city, reflecting an intentional panoramic view presented to Galata, north of the Golden Horn (Figure 10.4).¹²

In analyzing the image presented by the Prospect, can we identify a specifically 'Ottoman' character to the city? In this regard, Zeynep Çelik has contrasted the pre-modern Ottoman city with a pre-conquest Byzantine city of broad thoroughfares and fora, arguing that the Ottoman city constituted a clear topographical and historical break in which public space was de-emphasized in favour of religious institutions. Çelik, and subsequently Kafescioğlu, describe the reorganization of the city based upon the division of the city into quarters or *nahiyes* mostly centred on major religious foundations, and *mahalles*, centred upon mosques, tombs, and convents, which were funded by *vakıfs*, or religious foundations. However Çelik places particular emphasis upon changes in the nature of public space, deriving supportive evidence for such a transformation in part upon the birds-eye view of Constantinople made by the Venetian publisher and cartographer Giovanni Andrea Vavassore in c. 1520.¹³ This interpretation is, we would argue, problematic and needs revision. Firstly, Vavassore himself probably never saw Istanbul, but based his woodcut upon an earlier view, possibly produced by Gentile Bellini, who visited Constantinople in 1479–1481. Furthermore, the convention of the bird's-eye view was itself broadly symbolic, rather than scientifically accurate, and thus any details in the Vavassore depiction must be examined with caution.¹⁴ Secondly, Çelik's 'antique' characterization of Late Byzantine Constantinople is not supported by the archaeological evidence, which indicates that the later Byzantine city had either abandoned or greatly modified the early 'Roman' layout.¹⁵

11 Kafescioğlu 2009, 130; Necipoğlu 2010, 266.

12 Guidoni 1987, 20–41. It was from along the valley behind Pera-Galata that the Ottomans were able to roll their ships and thus finally to assault the city from the Golden Horn. We thank the anonymous reviewer for this observation.

13 Çelik 1993, 3–30; Kafescioğlu 2009, 53–108. On Vavassore, see Witcombe 2004, 124–125; van der Sman 2000, 235; Manners 1997, 87, 91–94; Bagrow 1939.

14 On the Vavassore map of Constantinople and its copies, see Stichel 2001; Manners 1997; Berger 1994 and 1995; and Striker 1986. For technical development and cultural meanings of maps around the time of the Vavassore map see Fead 1933, and Schulz 1978.

15 For evidence for the maritime and market districts in Constantinople, see Mango 1990 and 1993; Mundell Mango 2000 and 2001; Magdalino 1996, 2000 and 2007; Müller-Wiener 1977.

Underlying Çelik's argument is an apparently widely-held assumption that the pre-conquest Byzantine city was qualitatively different from the Ottoman one, and furthermore was characterized by depopulation and desertion.¹⁶ While the demographic and economic arguments for decline are persuasive, to draw a distinction between western and eastern, Byzantine and Ottoman urban topography nonetheless requires nuancing. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that the Late Antique urban layouts of regular streets, colonnaded emboloi, and geometrically-ordered urban fora did not characterize Late Byzantine Constantinople, in which the street layouts were far less ordered, and clusters of dwellings were typically grouped around neighbourhood churches. In fact, its layout would have more closely resembled early Ottoman Istanbul or a mediaeval European town. Bouras has previously described what he called a 'complete lack of urban planning in Byzantine cities built after Iconoclasm', which accords with a similar lack of overall order in documented Ottoman towns, such as Thessalonica.¹⁷ In fifteenth-century Constantinople, as in Late Byzantine Thessalonica, colonnaded arcaded streets had either fallen into ruin, or were built over with a generally denser and poorer building stock.¹⁸ For example, the Forum of Constantine, which early sources describe as a circular open area, was later infilled with a straight market street in the Middle Byzantine period, while roadways which, on the basis of archaeological evidence, were in use in the 6th to 8th centuries, connecting the forum of Strategion with Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome, were overlaid by later Byzantine features. This suggests changes to the street layout in the Late Byzantine period, and the evolution towards a less formal spatial structure.¹⁹ Similarly, the Strategion itself, an important public space that is thought to date back to the Macedonian conquest by Philip II, had sunk from a 'Roman'-style, enclosed forum to a muddy market-place.²⁰ It is thus possible to see in the reurbanization of Constantinople-Istanbul the construction of new infrastructure in areas which had become re- or de-urbanized.

16 See for example, Magdalino 2002, 535–536.

17 Bouras 1998, 98; Dimitriadis 1983, maps 1: Thessalonica in 1478, 2: Thessalonica in 1525.

18 See Ernest Mamboury's plan of discoveries made near the Column of Constantine (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, neg. no. R17531) published in Bardill, 1997, 72 fig. 3. See also Westbrook 2013 on transformation of roads leading to the Strategion and harbours on the Golden Horn. On Late Byzantine Thessalonica, see Bakirtzis 2003, 42.

19 Westbrook 2013, 3–38.

20 On the Strategion, see Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae, in Notitia Dignitatum (Seeck 1876, 233), and Matthews 2012, 103–104. See also Mango 1990, 14, 19, 32, 43.

Notwithstanding the transformation of the urban layout between the Early and Late Byzantine periods, evidenced by changes in construction practices, neglect of public spaces, overall depopulation despite growth in the 11th and 12th centuries,²¹ and the concentration of the population into pockets, mostly centred upon the ports, it is possible to see in the 15th and 16th centuries a degree of continuity with the immediately preceding period, in the construction of enclosed market buildings (*bedestans*) and merchants' quarters (*hans*) which recall the earlier structures, as Mundell Mango has noted.²² Indeed, it would appear that the physical fabric of the early Ottoman city shared similarities, perhaps a continuity, with the Late Byzantine city. Despite the relative absence of identifiably Byzantine buildings by the time of the Prospect, there were, during the reigns of Mehmet II and Bayezit II, a large number of converted Byzantine houses and churches, as well as Italian trading buildings that had retained their function. By the mid-16th century, the impression given by the Prospect, which portrays an overwhelmingly 'Islamic' image of the city, suggests that many of these structures had either lost their former associations, and therefore had lost any symbolic significance, or had been demolished.²³

In her study of the transformation of Constantinople after the conquest of the city by the army of Mehmet II, Kafescioğlu acknowledges the influence of the previous Byzantine layout upon Ottoman Istanbul. As noted above, in the post-conquest period, Istanbul and other Ottoman cities such as Thessalonica were comprised of identifiable districts and neighbourhoods, the latter often centred upon a local mosque and its *vakıf*, or religious endowment, or parish church (the latter usually Greek Orthodox or Armenian).²⁴ However in the early decades after 1453, the centrality of the mosque in the social life and identity of the neighbourhood was, Kafescioğlu argues, less absolute than previous scholarship had suggested.²⁵ She notes that, in the north-western section of the city, many of the private houses, if not Byzantine, 'must have been newly built following extant patterns'.²⁶ The question remains about the neighbourhood mosques: did they form the core of a new urban layout around them, or fit into a preexisting one? The example of the Kapı Ağası Mahmut ağa

21 Mango 1986, 130–131.

22 Mundell Mango 2000.

23 Kafescioğlu 2009, 204–206. The Islamic appearance of the city in the Prospect raises the question of whether this reflects an intention on the part of the artist. On the symbolic aspects of the Prospect, see Westbrook et al. 2010.

24 Bouras 1998, 98; Dimitriadis 1983, maps 1: Thessalonica in 1478, 2: Thessalonica in 1525.

25 Kafescioğlu 2009, 135, 180–184, 196.

26 Kafescioğlu 2009, 199–200.

mosque is instructive—it was built directly on the foundations of a preexistent Byzantine building, possibly originally a palace chapel, as it lies within the boundary of the Lower Great Palace.²⁷

Nonetheless, it is clear from the image conveyed by the Prospect that the city had been symbolically transformed (Figure 10.5). This is most obvious from the depiction of the crescent above the dome of Hagia Sophia. Aside from the transformation of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, the second major urban re-inscription is apparent in the disappearance of the imperial funerary church of the Holy Apostles, and its replacement by the Fatih mosque, which may have been intended as a similarly dynastic monument, as Kafescioğlu remarks: “The foundation inscription of the mosque, too, announced the meaning of the complex as a monument to the conquest and to the dynasty.”²⁸

The third major transformation is effected by the Ottoman *Eski* (Old) and *Topkapı* Palaces, the former occupying the central position of the Prospect, opposite the Galata Tower, and the latter the entire area north of Hagia Sophia (see Figure 10.2), and east of the harbour district down to the Bosphorus and Golden Horn. While it is likely that the Topkapı Palace replaced several imperial properties and the Forum of Leo I, it is not known which buildings or institutions were erased to make way for the Eski Sarayı.

While Kafescioğlu suggests that the forecourt of the Eski Sarayı was the former Forum of Theodosius—later known as Forum Taurus—a major Byzantine public space located immediately south of the site in question, it is however to be doubted if this site still existed as a formal square, and the main entrance may well have been to the east, as it stood at the end of the 18th century.²⁹ Could this eastern entrance and street have preexisted the Conquest, as a convenient route between this site and Hagia Sophia? This raises the issue of what building complex or buildings preexisted the Eski Sarayı and the Süleymaniye mosque—the site in Byzantine times was the immediate destination of the Valens Aqueduct and the Great Nymphaeum, suggesting a high-status function nearby. To its immediate west was the Philadelphion, probably constructed by Constantine I, and meeting it to the south was the Forum Taurus, or Theodosian Forum, with its monumental gates connecting the eastern and western arms of the Mese. Four early sixth-century churches with adjacent cisterns were found in this area, and two further structures to the east, suggesting a major ecclesiastical complex that may have been developed within

27 Müller-Wiener 1977, 227–228, 313, fig. 358. The chapel was certainly within the palace prior to the sack by the Fourth Crusade in 1204.

28 Kafescioğlu 2009, 82.

29 Thus, the older maps indicate a main entrance to the east.

a pre-existing imperial estate.³⁰ Immediately south of the northern branch of the Mese was the Balaban Aga Mescid, formerly a central plan church of the 5th to 6th centuries, and adjacent to the Theotokos church and monastery (Kalenderhane Camii) were found the remains of a high-status, probably private, bath complex datable to the 4th to 5th centuries, presumably fed by the Acqueduct of Valens, as well as traces of an early church, datable to the 6th to 8th centuries.³¹

With regard to the north side facing the Golden Horn, Magdalino, on the basis of Byzantine texts, has suggested that a significant high-status complex housing nuns, which later during the reign of Theophilus (r. 829–842) became a hostel for women, lay on a hill above Zeugma.³² He associates this with the Pantokrator Monastery (Zeyrek Kilise Camii), but it is proposed here that the site of the Eski Sarayı, also lying above Zeugma in Region VII, is a strong candidate (Figure 10.6). There are several other possible sites for former high-status residences (οἶκοι) in this area. Thus the Prospect depicts several ‘Roman’-looking buildings at a site that corresponds with the present day School of Botany of Istanbul University.³³ The Eski Sarayı was briefly occupied by Mehmet II as his palace, but very soon became a residence for retired women of the harem—surely a fitting usage for a former hostel for women! In summary, although evidence is patchy it would seem that the site of the Eski Sarayı had been occupied by a significant foundation, possibly a palace that was later transformed into a charitable institution. If this were the case, the Ottoman palace was established on a former large Byzantine estate, thus a close translation of the original.

The use of symbolically significant sites, and the similarity in architectural style between Hagia Sophia and Mehmet’s mosque, suggests what Necipoğlu has described as ‘a pointed dialogue with the city’s antiquities’.³⁴ The emulation of Hagia Sophia in the Ottoman imperial mosques can in fact be seen as a ‘targeted citation’, in Schenkluhn’s terminology, through which the original context is mastered, asserting the new political hegemony.³⁵ The Byzantine monuments had a mixed fate: while Mehmet II is recorded as having an interest in the preservation of Byzantine antiquities, his more religiously orthodox successor, Bayezit II, wrought much damage both to religious and secular

30 Firatli 1951; Schneider 1952, 222–223; Mamboury 1951, 433–437.

31 On the bath, see Müller-Wiener 1977, 48–49.

32 Magdalino 2007, 1: 1–111.

33 Westbrook et al. 2010, 73–75 and fig. 14.

34 Necipoğlu 2010, 266.

35 Schenkluhn 1999, 37, cited in Nille 2013, 86.

monuments, including the destruction of the Column of Theodosius in the above forum. Famously of course, the column of Constantine was preserved, perhaps for superstitious reasons.

Further to the west, it would appear that from the time of Mehmet II, the Ottomans built upon the pre-existing structure of the Byzantine markets. According to the *Chronicle* of Kritovoulos, Mehmet had ordered the construction of a *bedestan* (covered marketplace), and had repaired the aqueducts.³⁶ Thus in the Prospect (Figure 10.7) we see depicted and labeled the 'Kaiserin' and 'Ibrahim' caravanserais—both were enclosed markets. Using viewshed³⁷ analysis, based on viewpoints identified by Wulzinger,³⁸ it is possible to make identifications of Han buildings shown in the market district—thus the 'Kaiserin' *Han* corresponds to the present-day sandal market, while the 'Ibrahim' *Han* corresponds with that of the Cevşâhir market. On the port frontage, the Prospect reveals shifts in occupation. In part of the area of the former Venetian colony, a long building is labeled: 'Juden kirchen und Sinago' [Jews' church and synagogue]. Nearby, a gate is identified as the 'Jews' Gate'. The presence of a Jewish population in the city precedes the Conquest. In the Middle to Late Byzantine periods, a substantial, dense Jewish quarter had been located in this area to the east in the vicinity of the Topkapı gardens, thus on the eastern edge of what had been the Prosphorion harbour, and to the south from the Jews' Gate facing the Golden Horn, extending up the hill as far as Hagia Sophia.³⁹ This quarter was located, therefore, in the vicinity of the major Early Byzantine road linking the forum of Strategion with the Great Church.⁴⁰ However, from the time of Mehmet II, there had also been mass importations of populations from elsewhere in the empire, including Muslims, Jews, Armenians and Greeks.⁴¹ This process had been accelerated by the expulsions of Jews from Portugal (1497) and Spain (1492). Given the confined space in which the new migrants were housed, there was resultant overcrowding—indeed, the port district depicted in the Prospect would be transformed a decade later by a major fire (1569) that raged through this area.⁴²

36 Kritovoulos, *Chronicle*, cited by Kafescioğlu 2009, 28.

37 By viewshed, I refer to the area of the land- or city-scape included within a particular cone of vision. See Westbrook et al. 2010.

38 Wulzinger 1932, map.

39 Rozen 2010, 56–57.

40 Rozen 2010, 56–57.

41 Kafescioğlu 2009, 184–185; Rozen 2010, 56–57.

42 Rozen 2010, 57.

As Magdalino and Mundell Mango have documented, the port area had changed substantially by the Middle and Late Byzantine periods. While in early Constantinople the waterfront had been built around two enclosed harbours—the Neorian to the west, and the Proosphorian to the east—by the later period, the ancient harbours had been filled in and built over. The adjacent forum of the Strategion lost some of its significance, and the sea walls were expanded and strengthened to present a continuous frontage.⁴³ The sea-walls had been strengthened by the ninth-century emperors Michael II and Theophilus, and further fortified after the Byzantine recapture of the city from the Franks in 1261.⁴⁴ This process was continued into the Ottoman period. In the process the ancient harbours on the Golden Horn were filled in, and the Golden Horn itself became a giant harbour—as depicted by Lorck, by the 16th century there were extensive wharves along the waterfront, consisting of landing-stages belonging to various national or city trading groups.⁴⁵

This is the image presented in Lorck's Prospect (Figure 10.8)—a continuous frontage of walls and towers at regular intervals—123 in all on the outer sea-wall facing the Golden Horn, including the double towers on Seraglio Point. These towers have not been shown in plan before, historians relying on extant structures and those recorded in old maps, but the Prospect enables, through establishment of viewpoints, a straight-forward means of establishing the location of towers, and hence walls. The result is a coastline with more pronounced indentations than the modern shore. The question remains: are these the work of the Byzantines or of the Ottoman period? As noted above, the walls had been repaired and strengthened in the 9th and mid-13th centuries, and while this process must have continued under the Ottomans—certainly repairing damage from the Conquest, and as the Prospect makes clear, adding distinctive conical roofs to several towers—it is unlikely that the alignment of the walls or location of towers would have been altered. Such changes in alignment would have been evidenced by Ottoman property deeds referring to loss or gain of land. As the Prospect indicates, expansion of the city towards the water

43 The Neorian harbour and its adjacent boat-yards were the location for construction of naval ships, while the Proosphorian Harbour to the east, which was fronted by the commercial stoa of the greater and lesser Strategion fora, was commercial in nature. To the east of the Proosphorian harbour a great defensive chain protected the Golden Horn from enemy attack. See Magdalino 2000; Mango 1986, 120–121.

44 van Millingen 1899, 181–185; Talbot 1993, 249.

45 Magdalino, 2002; Mundell Mango 2000. In the Middle and Late Byzantine period, *skalai* (wharves) permitted the loading and unloading of cargoes on the Golden Horn. These continued in the Ottoman period as *İskeles*. See Müller-Wiener 1994: map of *İskele* locations.

occurred outside the wall, including construction of depots, wharves and a mosque. Moreover, archaeological evidence of surviving fragments of the wall facing the Golden Horn indicate that, as far as we can establish, the walls were repaired and maintained, rather than replaced by entirely new structures.⁴⁶ To conclude, the Prospect would appear to give us, as close as is feasible, a view of the Byzantine sea-walls facing the Golden Horn (Figure 10.9).

Behind the walls in the Later Byzantine period, accessed through city gates, there had been located the properties, sometimes fortified, belonging to each foreign trading colony, with their associated markets, churches, synagogues and mosques. The evidence for the urban layout of the market district provided by Lorck's Panorama, as revealed by viewshed analysis (Figure 10.10),⁴⁷ exhibits a considerable degree of similarity to this area of the city as described on the 1913–1914 Contag and Haverstadt survey maps. By the mid-16th century, there was already a concentration of mercantile establishments on what appears to be the same area as described by these maps. In the Late Byzantine period, the area of the former Proshphorion Harbour, known by merchants as *Perforo*, had become the location for the Genoese Quarter, which was located approximately on the site between Yalı Köşkü and the fish market, or Balık Pasarı, with the quarters of the Pisans and Amalfitans nearby. Magdalino places the colony of the Genoese immediately west of this harbour and the forum and market of Strategion.⁴⁸ While this pattern was disrupted after the Ottoman conquest, foreign colonies persisted in the city, notably the Venetians. Physically, there were also elements of continuity in the Ottoman period—the northern-directed Early Byzantine Portico of Domninos, or Makros Embolos, has been associated with the similarly directed Ottoman streets connecting the Grand Bazaar with the northern harbour-front on the Golden Horn.⁴⁹ According to Mundell Mango's thesis, which is supported by archaeological evidence in

46 Müller-Wiener 1977, 310–11. Müller-Wiener notes firstly the damage inflicted by cannon fire from the attacking Ottoman ships in 1453 upon the walls and the Petrion fortress and monastery. Secondly, the Ottoman records mention expansion of the Petrion under Mehmet II, and rebuilding after earthquakes in 1574, 1595 and 1719, thus after the Prospect was drawn. Here Müller-Wiener is basing his evidence upon Schneider 1950, 65–107.

47 For viewshed analysis, see Westbrook et al. 2010; Westbrook and Van Meeuwen 2013.

48 Magdalino 2000; Müller-Wiener 1994, 126–127. Magdalino's locations for the trading quarters are based upon published surviving mediaeval documents of sale. For location of Venetian Quarter, see also Ağır 2009.

49 Mundell Mango 2000, 2001. Portico of Domninos, later called the Makros or Maurianos Embolos. See also Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographiae*, 82.5–9 (Ševčenko 2011, 271), where Emperor Basil I is recorded as having repaired the church of St Anastasia at the Portico of Domninos (‘τοῖς Δομνίνου λεγομένοις ἐμβόλοις).

several locations,⁵⁰ the Makros Embolos began as a porticoed street that ran north from the Mese, or Middle Way, following the ridge of the peninsula. In the Late Byzantine period, commercial markets and warehouses and hostels were established by Byzantine and Italian merchants in the area later occupied by Ottoman *hans* and the Egyptian Market.⁵¹

As noted above, there is evidence that in Late Byzantine Constantinople, as in Thessalonica, the *stoai*, colonnaded arcades flanking important streets or *fora*, had either fallen into ruin, disuse, or were built over with a denser, 'mediæval' and more crudely constructed building stock. One possible remnant of the *stoai* may be depicted on Sheet 10 of Lorck's Prospect, on which a colonnade is shown at the foot of a raised terrace, perhaps belonging to an embolos facing the harbour.⁵² Indeed, the topography depicted in Sheet 10 closely parallels the present-day topography—the retaining wall for the terrace still exists, and contains sections of what appears to be Early Byzantine brickwork. The existing School of Botany above the terrace occupies the site of the former headquarters of the Ağa of the Janissaries—a group of Classical-looking structures occupy the site in Lorck's drawing, possibly surviving remnants of a high-status *οἶκος*; indeed, Mundell Mango and Magdalino have concluded that several aristocratic houses survived in this area into the Late Byzantine period.⁵³ While it is possible to see in the Late Byzantine period clear evidence of neglect and depopulation, and the concentration of the population into pockets that were predominantly centred upon the ports, and in post-conquest Istanbul the construction of new infrastructure in areas which had become re- or de-urbanized, it is surely also possible to see in the post-conquest period in certain regions of the city a considerable continuity with pre-conquest Constantinople.

Can we be more specific about this apparent continuity? Older maps of Istanbul reveal the primary armatures in this region.⁵⁴ Running approximately north-south, to the east of the present-day site of Istanbul University is Üzüncarşı Caddesi, which passes through the Grand Bazaar, or Kapalı Çarşı, then descends to the harbour on the Golden Horn. A north-south street

50 Müller-Wiener notes Byzantine brick vaulting in the basement of the Balkapan Hanı, at the northern end of Capalıçarşı Caddesi, the proposed route of the Makros Embolos, suggesting that the structure is a rebuilding of a pre-Ottoman structure, either Byzantine or belonging to the Venetian *Bailo*. Müller-Wiener 1977, 343.

51 Mundell Mango 2000, 204–207.

52 Westbrook et al. 2010, 73–75.

53 Mundell Mango 2001, 45; Magdalino 2001, 53–69.

54 Significant older maps for the pre-modern urban layout of the Istanbul peninsula include Stolpe 1863 and Contag & Havertag 1913–1914.

depicted in the Prospect is almost certainly the same feature. Again, the Prospect depicts several buildings on the skyline known to have adjoined the Divan Yolu street (see below). Between these major north-south streets however, the smaller lanes evidently adjusted themselves to the often steep terrain, creating a dense network of non-orthogonal streets forming neighbourhoods around local mosques and their associated buildings (Figure 10.11).

As noted above, the core *bedestans* in the Prospect—‘Kaiserin’ (Empress) and ‘İbrahim’ caravanserais—may be identified with the present-day Bedestan-i Cedid or Sandal Bedestan, and the Cevşâhir Bedestan, both built during the reign of Mehmet II, perhaps by Pargalı İbrahim Paşa (Grand Vizier, 1523–1536), and both sites located within the core of Karpalı Çarşı (the Grand Bazaar).⁵⁵ The rectangular structure, depicted with corner towers behind them on the skyline, appears to be the *medrese* (school) of Atik Ali paşa mosque. Closer to the water, the ‘Mahomet Pasha Caravanserai’ can be identified as the Kürçüler Hanı (late 15th century), near the also-surviving Atik İbrahim paşa mosque and *medrese*,⁵⁶ and the Mahmud Paşa *hamam* (1466) which lined, or were accessed off, the east-west-directed street later known as Mercan Caddesi, from the eastern, Divan gate of the Eski Sarayı, that becomes the Çakmakçılar Yokuşu before dividing into several streets leading down to the port area. The Byzantine Irene Tower is shown free-standing, prior to its absorption within the later Valide Han.

Delimiting the market area to the east is Mahmud Paşa Street, curving north to the port, and leading south to the Mahmud Paşa Mosque (1462). Immediately to the east is the Rüstem paşa *medrese* on Jerabatan Street leading south-east down to Hagia Sophia.⁵⁷ The role of this east-west street as an important early artery is also indicated on the 1863 Stolpe map, where it and the North-South Üzüncarşı Street are depicted as being lined with large *hans*. The map depicts large *konaks* and public offices further east on the high ground, located between the market district and the Topkapı Sarayı. It would appear that the east-west street and its continuation down to the Golden Horn (Haliç) had, in part, replaced the Byzantine streets leading down to the forum of Strategion and the harbour-front that had been blocked by the construction of the western portion of the wall enclosing the Topkapı, which had subsumed a large, previously built-up urban area.⁵⁸ Without archaeological evidence, it is impossible

55 The name suggests the Grand Vizier Pargalı İbrahim Paşa; however there is, to our knowledge, no evidence that he commissioned a *han* in this location.

56 The Atik İbrahim Paşa mosque is depicted overscaled in the Prospect.

57 Anon. 1863, scale 1:10,000.

58 Westbrook 2013.

to establish the previous alignment of any east-west Byzantine streets in this vicinity. Nonetheless, a considerable degree of continuity may be expected. Like the apparently similar alignment of the market street Üzüncarşı Caddesi to its Byzantine predecessor the Makros Embolos, we have established that the nearby Çatalçeşme Sokağı continued to follow, for most of its length, its original orientation through the Ottoman period, forming a connecting artery between Divan Yolu Caddesi and the harbour front.

In several cases, Ottoman buildings appear to follow the alignment of former Byzantine structures. Thus, the artist has depicted another *han*-like building to the right of the Atik İbrahim Paşa Mosque, on the site of the eighteenth-century Kilit Hanı (Lock Market) located on the corner of Nargileci Sk. and facing the Samanveren mosque, across from, and adjacent to the north-south road of Üzüncarşı Caddesi. This Ottoman *han*, occupying the same site as the depicted building, thus shared a common orientation to the north-south street, raising the question of whether it had a pre-Ottoman foundation.. Similarly, the Balkapan Hanı close to the Golden Horn and built before the Prospect, has—as noted above—Byzantine foundations, providing evidence for the persistence of commercial functions and building uses in this area.⁵⁹ It should be noted in addition that the digital model indicates that these north-south streets existing in the sixteenth-century view also correspond in large part to the present-day streets leading down to the harbour. But the main evidence for continuity is provided by the sea walls themselves, albeit repaired and strengthened under Ottoman rule. On the basis of documentary and archaeological evidence,⁶⁰ in likelihood they approximate the appearance of the Late Byzantine ramparts.

Our study of the commercial district of Ottoman Istanbul depicted in Lorck's Prospect demonstrates that the evidence of the drawing suggests a more evolutionary transformation of the city than has previously been argued. The walls were substantially unchanged, while the major east-west and north-south streets of this area in the 16th century broadly corresponded to those mapped in 1913–1914 and, on the basis of archaeology, may reflect a pre-Ottoman layout of non-'Classical' appearance. The commercial district was laid out approximately in relation to two east-west streets: the first passing through the Kapalı Çarşı to the İbrahim Paşa mosque, and the second leading from the main gate of the Eski Sarayı then bending south towards the Kapalı Çarşı, while branches descended north to the harbour-front. The north-west-aligned Üzüncarşı street, which, as argued above, is likely to have been a continuation

59 Mundell Mango 2000, 206–207 and fn. 152; Müller Wiener 1977, 343.

60 See n. 46 above.

of the Byzantine Makros Embolos, connected the ridge to the harbour-front. The street network reflected in the Prospect did not accord with any orthogonal layout, but may well, in part, have derived from the pre-existing Late Byzantine street structure. Thus, the area from the Grand Bazaar down to the Golden Horn appears to have been founded upon a similar Byzantine structure of *emboloi*, squares and mercantile halls.

This chapter has studied the Prospect of Melchior Lorck in the attempt first to discern to what extent the depicted townscape reveals details of the preceding Byzantine city, and secondly, to what extent the Ottoman city was a modification—a ‘translation’—of the preexisting city rather than a refoundation. The evidence suggests that for all the symbolism of renewal, rather than constructing a ‘new’ city, the Ottoman sultans adapted the one they found, imprinting it with an Islamic identity but (except for the major foundations such as the Topkapı Sarayı and the Süleymaniye and Fatih mosques) not necessarily replanning the urban layout. Nonetheless, the city was ideologically transformed. First, the transformation of Hagia Sophia into a mosque was a case of ‘erasing the past through varying the model’. Secondly, the ‘going beyond’ Hagia Sophia in the Süleymaniye Mosque, amounts to a ‘subjugating’ citation, one that places the Roman empire into the position of vassal to the new Ottoman dynasty, what Schenkluhn has described as ‘mastering the past through a decontextualized citation’.⁶¹ Thirdly, the adaptation, in the Topkapı Palace, not only of the Byzantine Civil Service but also the Byzantine spatial hierarchies, again denoted the Ottomans as both conquerors and inheritors of the imperial throne. Here translation is an obvious expression of might. But beneath the ideology of symbolic forms, the city got on with the necessities of multi-ethnic survival. At this scale, it is here proposed, the changes were incremental. As has been argued above, the Ottoman renovation of the city built on the armatures that already existed, a structure that bore little resemblance to known Late Antique urban layouts. Instead, the continuity in urban districts such as the market and port areas further suggests that, unlike the orthogonal street layout which Berger proposed for the Byzantine city, in the late centuries the city exhibited a labyrinthine, mediaeval layout, as it did at the time of Lorck’s Prospect and, in certain districts, still does.

61 Schenkluhn 1999, 37–38.

Postscript

As outlined in two earlier publications,⁶² most of the drawing in the eastern area of the Prospect, from the area immediately west of Süleymaniye (Byzantine Zeugma) through to Sarayı Burnu (Saray Point) appears to have been predominantly drawn from two vantage points: atop the Galata (formerly Christ) Tower ('Viewpoint A'), and at the westernmost point on the Galata/Pera ramparts ('Viewpoint B'), as first theorized by Wulzinger.⁶³ There are exceptions to this: thus the skyline is in part drawn from lower down on the middle (east-west aligned) walls, and other details have been drawn from locations where, presumably, Lorck was able to get the optimal view. In other cases details have been drawn separately and then 'montaged' onto the Prospect. Thus, for example, the viewpoint for the Candarli Ibrahim Pasha mosque—a mosque depicted with a pyramidal roof—is difficult to identify. It appears to be drawn from a westerly viewpoint, but is depicted as much too large: it should be perhaps 60% of the size. Similarly, the Irene Tower is both incorrectly located, and viewed from a different location, possibly a tower on the sea-wall of Galata; it cannot be located by means of either Viewpoints A or B. Also, Constantine's Column is located in a position where it would be impossible to see it in this way. Neither viewpoints A or B show it in this position. Most of the buildings in the vicinity of the market area (including the Eski Saray and the Süleymaniye mosque and Kulliye) appear to have been drawn from Viewpoint A atop the Galata Tower. The buildings closer to the shore appear to be drawn from Viewpoint B, except for Candarli Ibrahim Pasha mosque and Irene Tower. This conflicts with Wulzinger's theory of 1932.

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62 Westbrook et. al. 2010; Westbrook and Van Meeuwen 2013.

63 Wulzinger 1932.

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FIGURE 10.1 *Detail of Melchior Lorck Prospect of Constantinople circa 1562. Sheets 11 and 12: Aqueduct of Valens, Column of Arcadius, and Ottoman Harbour.*
BY COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.

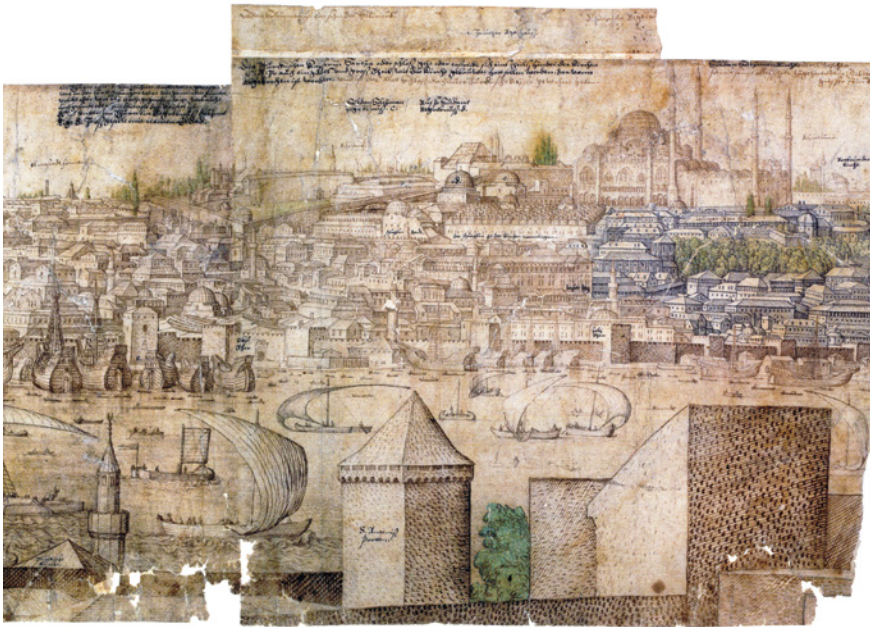


FIGURE 10.2 *Detail of Melchior Lorck Prospect of Constantinople. Sheets 9 and 10: Süleymaniye Mosque, and Eski Saray.*
BY COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.



FIGURE 10.3 *Detail of Melchior Lorck Prospect of Constantinople. Sheet 11: Self-portrait of Lorck with Turkish assistant.*
BY COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.

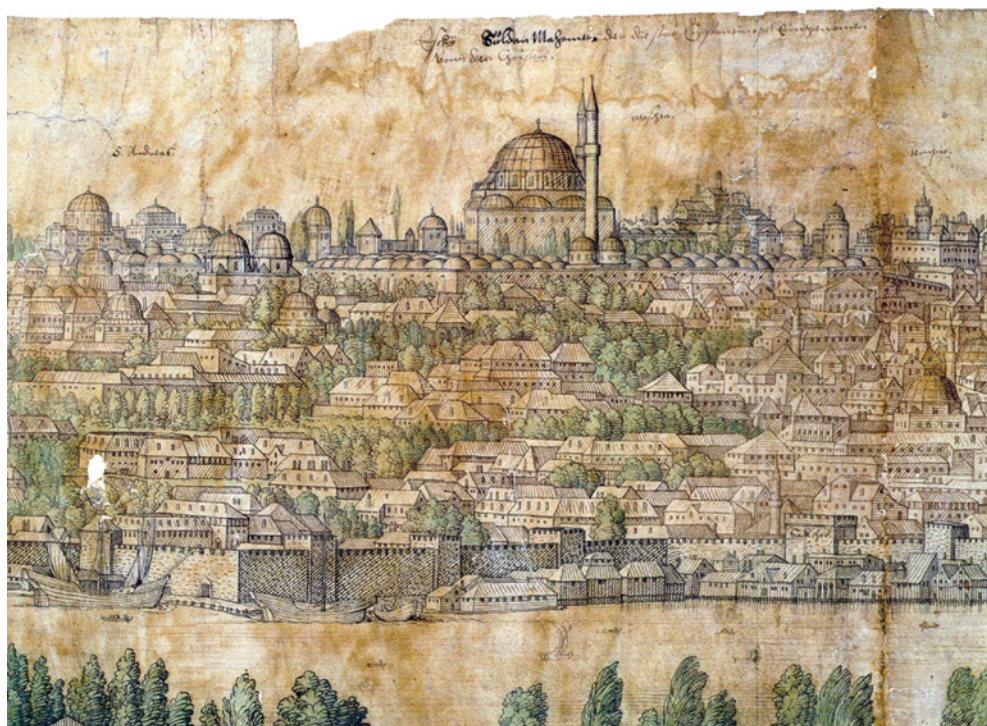


FIGURE 10.4 *Detail of Melchior Lorck Prospect of Constantinople. Sheet 13: First Mehmet II Fatih Mosque (built 1463-70).*
BY COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.

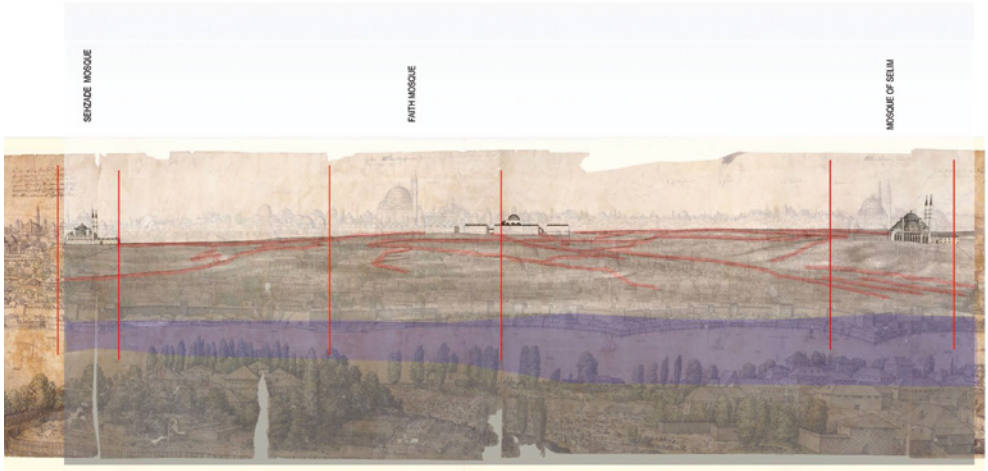


FIGURE 10.5 *Digital model of Fatih Mosque on Istanbul skyline (Nigel Westbrook with Rene van Meeuwen).*



FIGURE 10.6 *Detail of Melchior Lorck Prospect of Constantinople. Sheets 9 & 10, showing the district of Eski Saray.*

BY COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.



FIGURE 10.7A Aerial view of area of Grand Bazaar with north-south road (Uzunçarşı Cad. at north end) indicated by broken line.



FIGURE 10.7B Detail of 1913–1914 Contag and Haverstadt map of Istanbul.



FIGURE 10.8A *Section of the seawalls, depicted in Lorck Prospect of Constantinople.*

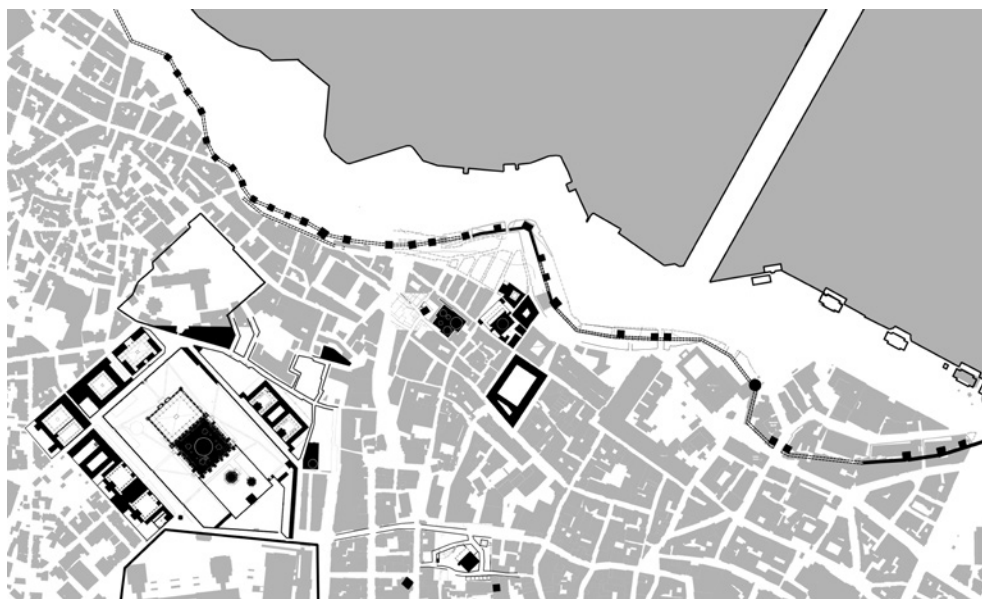


FIGURE 10.8B *Reconstruction plan of seawalls in market area at time of Prospect (author).*

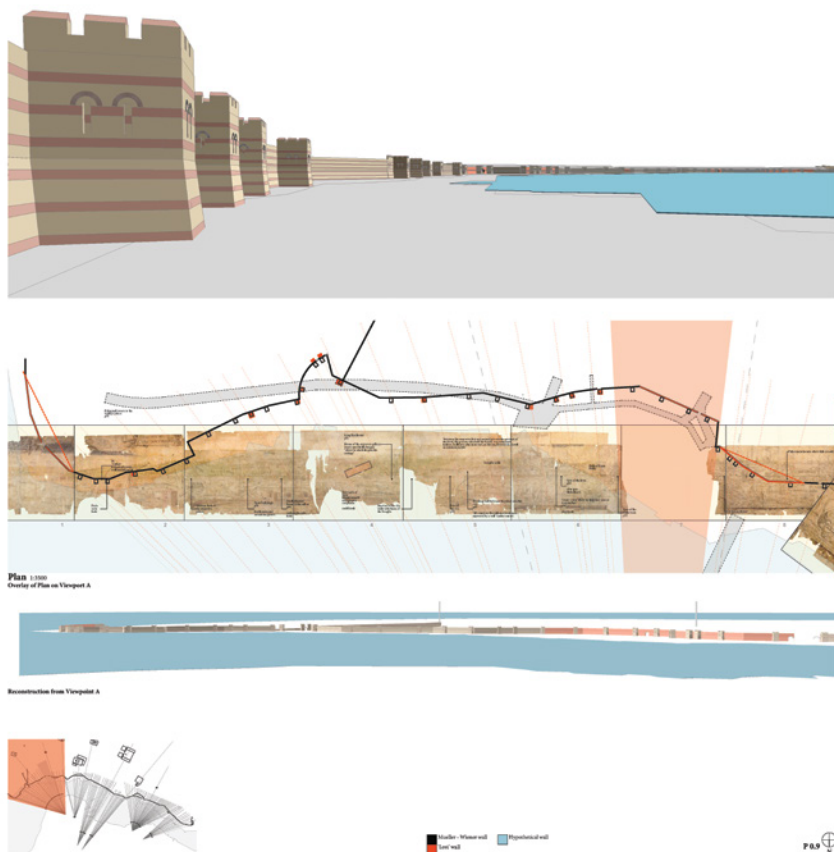


FIGURE 10.9 *Reconstruction of walls facing Golden Horn, as portrayed in Lorck Prospect. Plan shows section of walls centred on what was probably the former Eugenios Gate, which in the 16th century led into the Topkapı Palace grounds. The height of walls is based upon surviving sections.*
DRAWINGS BY JACK BRADSHAW, 2016.



FIGURE 10.10A *Detail of market area in Lorck Prospect of Constantinople.*



FIGURE 10.10B *Digital modeling of market area (Nigel Westbrook and Tristan Morgan 2014).*



FIGURE 10.11A *Viewshed plan of market area (authors).*

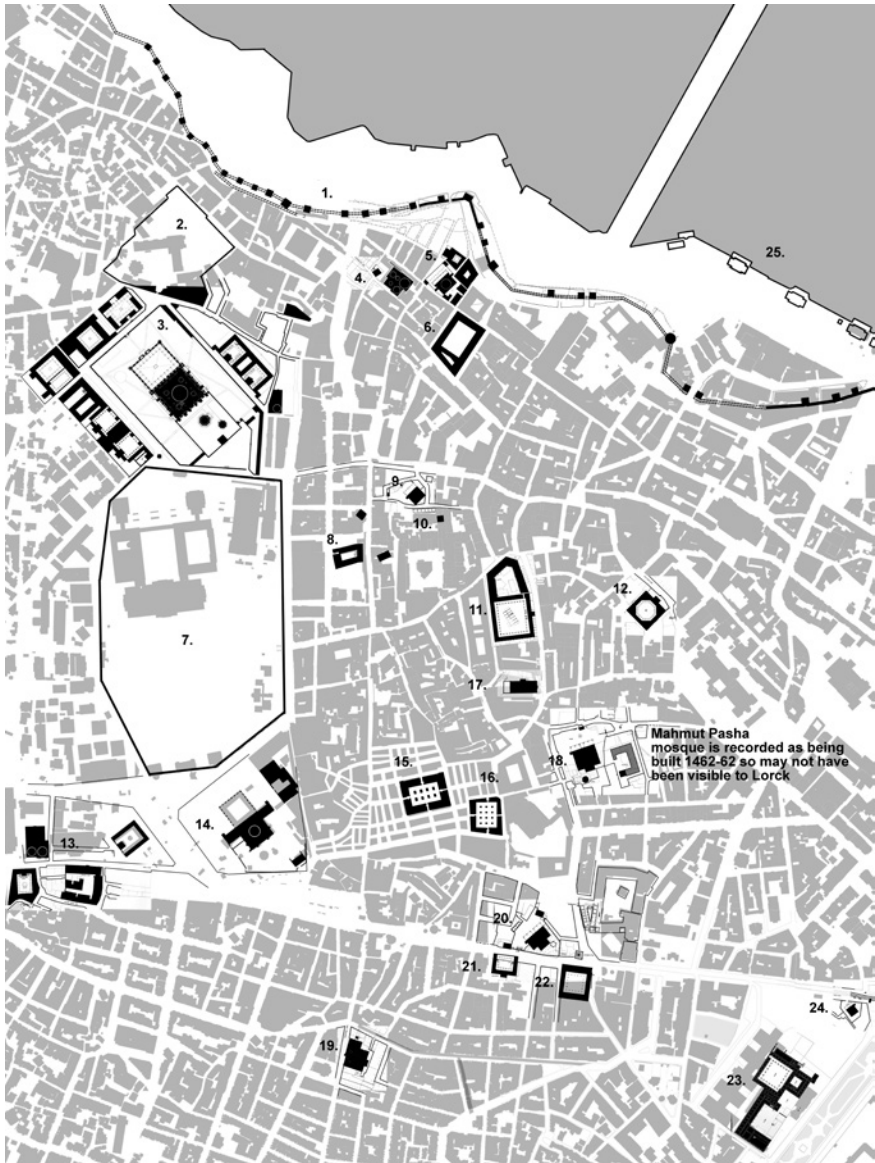


FIGURE 10.11B Major structures in market area shown in Lorck Prospect (authors): 1. Reconstructed Byzantine sea-walls; 2. Former Byzantine palace (?) now palace of the Aga of the Janissaries; 3. Süleymaniye Camii and Külliye; 4. Tahtakale Hammam; 5. Rüstem paşa Camii; 6. Balkapan Hanı (Byzantine foundations); 7. Eski Sarayı; 8. Kılıt Hanı (Byzantine foundations); 9. Atik İbrahim Paşa Camii; 10. Byzantine Irene Tower; 11. Kürçüler Hanı; 12. Rüstem paşa Medrese; 13. Beyazid Hammam and Medrese, Hasan paşa and Sinkeşhanı hanı; 14. Beyazid Camii; 15. Cevâhîr (great, or old) Bedestan; 16. Sandal Bedestan; 17. Mahmut paşa Hammam; 18. Mahmut paşa Camii, Medrese and Türbe (tomb); 19. Gedik paşa Mescid and Hammam; 20. Atik Ali paşa Camii and Çemberlitaş (Constantine's Column); 21. Atik Ali paşa Medrese; 22. Elçi Hanı (Ambassadors' lodging-house – demolished); 23. İbrahim paşa Sarayı; 24. Firuz Ağa Camii; 25. Line of modern sea-front.

Byzantium after Byzantium? Two Greek Writers in Seventeenth-century Wallachia

Alfred Vincent

Byzance après Byzance: the title of Nicolae Iorga's famous book (1935) neatly embraces the ongoing role of the Byzantine heritage, and of émigrés from the Byzantine lands, in the Romanian-speaking territories of Wallachia and Moldavia, long after the fall of Constantinople.¹ The process reaches its zenith under the Phanariot regimes of the 18th and early 19th centuries, when 'princes' from the Greek-speaking, Orthodox elite of Constantinople ruled these two vassal states on behalf of the sultan, making their respective capitals, Bucharest and Iași, into centres of Greek culture.

For centuries before the Phanariot era, Moldavia and Wallachia had been the only parts of the Balkan area to retain some autonomy under Orthodox rulers, and they had become magnets for Greek merchants, soldiers, churchmen and scholars. The development of 'Byzantium after Byzantium' is chronicled, explicitly or otherwise, not only by local writers but also by Greeks, some of whom played a role in the public life of these Transdanubian territories.

This chapter compares the writings of two men from Epirus, resident in Wallachia, who composed verse chronicles in vernacular Greek relating to that country's affairs. Their works were published together, in 1638. Printed in Venice, the book became a bestseller and was reprinted at intervals until the 19th century.² Both parts of the volume have value as primary sources on Romanian history, although most of the dramatic events they relate are recorded independently elsewhere.³ For Byzantinists, their particular interest may lie in their treatment of the Byzantine heritage and of the idea of a restoration of Christian rule in Constantinople. These related topics will be the main focus of this chapter. But first we need a brief account of the background.

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- 1 In this chapter 'Romanian' is used as shorthand for 'Romanian-speaking', referring to Wallachia, Moldavia and, where relevant, Transylvania. There was no unified Romanian state until the very brief unification under Michael the Brave in 1600.
 - 2 For a detailed treatment of the works, with bibliography, see Vincent 1995 and 1998. More recent studies are referred to in further footnotes.
 - 3 On the chronicler Stavrinou as a source, see now Dinu 2012b.

Historical Evolution of Wallachia up to the 17th Century

The Romanian lands had a long history as political units.⁴ In the 13th century Wallachia had been a frontier region, administered by local governors on behalf of the Hungarian king. Moldavia had been tributary to the Tartar Khanate, though later it too was incorporated into Hungary. In the 14th century, dynamic leaders created unified state formations in each region, and asserted their independence. In Wallachia this was achieved mainly under Basarab I, who ruled from 1310 to 1352, while in Moldavia independence came somewhat later.

The rulers in both Moldavia and Wallachia held the Slavic title of *voivode*, 'general', inherited from their predecessors before independence.⁵ In Romanian the term *domn*, 'lord', was widely used, as was its Greek equivalent αὐθέντης. The *voivode* was assisted by a council of great landowners (boyars) and a corps of officials. Rulers were chosen from members of a particular lineage, in the case of Wallachia that of Basarab. Instability at the top was endemic, with *voivodes* frequently enthroned, deposed or reinstated by rival factions and/or foreign intervention.

Well before the fall of Constantinople, Byzantine influence was strong in the two territories. The first 'Princely Church' at the old Wallachian capital of Curtea de Argeş was built around 1352 in Byzantine style.⁶ Orthodox archbishoprics were founded, under the auspices of Constantinople, in Wallachia in 1359 and in Moldavia in 1401–1402. From this time on the two regions can be said to form part of what Obolensky (1971) famously called the 'Byzantine Commonwealth'.

Once the Ottomans gained a foothold in the Balkans, they set their sights on Wallachia and Moldavia. In Wallachia two *voivodes* who resisted Ottoman domination were Vlad II Dracul (1436–1442, 1443–1447), and his son Vlad III Drăculea or Țepeș, the infamous Impaler (principal reign 1456–1465).⁷ In the long term, however, as the price of preserving internal autonomy, the rulers of both countries had to recognise the sultan as their overlord and pay

4 On the historical background Georgescu 1991 can be recommended. Summaries of events are also included in Vincent 1995 and 1998.

5 *Voivode* is the anglicised spelling used in Georgescu 1991, among others. Cf. Serbian *vojvoda*, Romanian *voievod*. The short form *vodă* is also used as a title, attached as a suffix (e. g. Mihai-vodă).

6 Illustrations can be found on the internet and in Georgescu 1991, 34.

7 Vlad II received his nickname from the insignia of the crusading Order of the Dragon with which he was invested by the Emperor Sigismund; his son, Vlad III, used the patronymic Drăculea in official documents. Dracul, 'the Dragon', has the meaning 'the Devil' in modern Romanian.

substantial tribute. The Ottoman rulers would impose and depose *voivodes* at will. Meanwhile, in the 16th century, Greeks were becoming prominent in commerce, and their influence was spreading.

Transylvania, the western and central region of modern Romania, concerns us less here, as despite earlier Byzantine connections it was now less attached to the Byzantine and post-Byzantine world. From being a voivodate under the Hungarian monarchy, the area emerged as a separate realm under John Zápolya in 1526. In 1570 it became an autonomous principality under the kingdom of Hungary, which was now part of the Habsburg domains. At the same time its princes generally paid tribute to the Ottoman sultan. In the Greek chronicles they are given the title of *κράλης*, 'king' (cf. Serbian *kralj*), and occasionally its Latinate equivalent, *ρόγας*. Transylvania's largely Romanian-speaking, Orthodox peasantry were dominated by a Hungarian Catholic landowning class, while some towns had influential German populations. The Orthodox were not recognised as a separate religious community. The Hungarian (and German) dominance secured for Transylvania a rather different history from that of the two other Romanian-speaking areas.

As well as their Byzantine heritage, Wallachia and Moldavia retained strong cultural links with the Slav-speaking world. In the 11th century the local church had been administered by the archbishopric of Ohrid, and after the foundation of the second Bulgarian empire in the 1180s it came under the Patriarchate of Veliko Tŭrnovo.⁸ The Old or Church Slavonic language, taught in monastery schools, was used in the liturgy and also in learned culture and official documents. The first printed book produced in the Romanian lands was a Slavonic religious text, published in 1508. Original works continued to be written in Slavonic, and, even in the 17th century, monasteries in Wallachia and Moldavia continued to function as centres for the copying of Slavonic manuscripts.

However, the vast majority of people in Wallachia and Moldavia spoke some variety of Romanian as their main and usually their only language of everyday communication. In the post-Byzantine centuries, Romanian was gradually being established as a written language. Printing in Romanian began with a catechism published in 1544; a New Testament appeared in 1551–1553 and other religious works followed in the 1560s.⁹ Many works were printed in Transylvania, but circulated throughout the region.

Our main focus is on a period beginning with the dramatic reign of *voivode* Michael of Wallachia (1593–1601), known as Michael the Brave, Mihai Viteazul. The context of his reign is the 'Long War' waged by the Habsburg monarchy

8 Ţugui 2012, 177–178.

9 Ţugui 2012, 216–221.

and its allies against the Ottoman empire (1593–1606). In 1594, with his people worn down by Ottoman demands and mistreatment, Michael launched a revolt, beginning with a massacre of resident ‘Turks’. In the following months he successfully resisted an Ottoman attempt to oust him by force and impose their own candidate for the voivodeship. He immediately went on the offensive, conducting raids south of the Danube in Ottoman Bulgaria.

The Sultan now prepared to invade with a much greater force, with the aim of abolishing the voivodate and turning Wallachia into a regular Ottoman province. In May 1595, in order to gain military assistance, a delegation of ecclesiastics and boyars signed on Michael’s behalf a treaty with Sigismund Báthory, prince of Transylvania, which effectively made Michael Sigismund’s vassal, though this became a dead letter when the Transylvanian prince resigned two years later. In the summer, Michael held off the large invading army under Sinan Pasha at the battle of Călugăreni, and although Sinan briefly occupied Bucharest, with reinforcements from Sigismund Michael soon liberated the city and destroyed part of the Ottoman army as it crossed the Danube at Giurgiu. In 1596, Michael again led his forces over the Danube into Bulgaria, attacking Ottoman fortresses and towns. In the following year, after mediation by the patriarch of Alexandria Meletios Pigas, the sultan finally agreed to recognise Michael as *voivode*.

In 1598 Michael prepared to renew the struggle and signed a treaty recognising the overlordship of the Holy Roman Emperor, Rudolph II. Once again he defeated an Ottoman invading force and took his own army south of the Danube. The Bulgarians responded by mounting their own rebellion against Ottoman rule. The transference of the throne of Transylvania in 1599 to Sigismund’s cousin, Cardinal András Báthory, who was in favour of peace with the Turks, gave Michael the opportunity to invade that country and remove the cardinal from power. From there he went on to invade Moldavia, meeting little resistance. Hence in 1600 Michael controlled all the three Romanian-speaking lands of Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania.

But this unification lasted only a few months. The Hungarian Catholic nobles of Transylvania were soon in revolt, and the Polish chancellor Zamojski, who was also in favour of accommodation with the Turks, invaded Moldavia and then Wallachia, placing his own candidates on the thrones of both. Defeated on all fronts, Michael and his court fled westward to seek aid from Emperor Rudolph in Prague. Rudolph received Michael favourably, and provided him with the resources to regain control of Transylvania, where Sigismund had once more been enthroned by the Hungarian nobility. Together with his old rival, the imperial general George Basta, Michael invaded Transylvania again and ousted Sigismund. But in August 1601, before he could build on his success, Michael was assassinated by soldiers in Basta’s pay.

Michael was a truly great military leader, and many believed that with support from other Christian peoples he might succeed in expelling the sultan from Constantinople. But he had limited resources, and the social cost of his campaigns was very high. In order to achieve revenue security, he restored the practice of 'tying' peasant cultivators to the landowners' estates. Perhaps for this reason, in Romanian folklore Michael appears not to have been the popular hero one might have expected.

From 1602 to 1610 Wallachia was ruled by Radu Șerban, a former member of Michael's court, who managed to preserve some autonomy. In 1611, however, the Ottomans entrusted the throne to Radu Mihnea, the son of *voivode* Mihnea Turcitul ('the Renegade'), so-called because he had embraced Islam. Radu Mihnea's reign partly foreshadows the Phanariot regime. He was prepared to act as an Ottoman vassal, providing military and diplomatic support. He had a cosmopolitan upbringing, having lived in Venice and on Mount Athos as well as in Constantinople. Like some earlier *voivodes*, Radu Mihnea had married a Greek lady.¹⁰ He had friendly relations with prominent Orthodox churchmen such as the future patriarch of Constantinople Cyril Loukaris, as well as the Metropolitan Matthew of Myra. Radu Mihnea evidently had some knowledge of Greek, though it is unclear how extensive this was. In his reign, Greek merchants and officials were increasingly prominent. Radu Mihnea allowed himself to be shuttled between the thrones of Wallachia and Moldavia as need arose until his death in 1626. He tried to establish a dynasty spanning the two principalities by grooming his son Alexandru Coconul ('the Baby') for a similar career. However, the project failed; after reigning in Wallachia in 1623–1627 and Moldavia in 1629–1630 Alexandru Coconul died in 1632.

Stavrinos' Verse Chronicle on Michael the Brave

The first part of the book we are discussing contains the verse chronicle on Michael the Brave by Stavrinos, an official in Michael's court, known from his position as the Vestiar (*vistier*, the Byzantine *βησιτέρης*, 'treasurer'). Stavrinos tells us (line 1302) that he was born at Malsianí or Máltsani, near Delvinë in northern Epirus, now southern Albania. Beyond that we have little biographical information.¹¹ As well as Greek he may have spoken a local Vlach dialect, a neo-Latin language related to Romanian, which would have eased the task of learning that language. Maybe, like other Greeks, he made his way to Wallachia on some commercial enterprise, before becoming attached to the *voivode*'s

10 Dinu 2012a, 371–372.

11 See Vincent 1995, 168–169. References are to Legrand's edition (1877).

court. Stavrinós was not mentioned among the high officials documented by Stoicescu;¹² probably he was one of a number of officers attached to the Grand Vestuary (*mare vistier*).¹³ After Michael's assassination in 1601, Stavrinós was apparently detained in the castle of Bistrița. By his own account it was there that he drafted his chronicle, soon after his hero's death (line 1307). A few passages were evidently added later, as they refer to events up to 1606.¹⁴

The work's 1312 lines are mostly in rhymed couplets of fifteen-syllable verse, which was the standard metrical form for narrative poems. Its title, *The valiant deeds (ανδραγαθείες) of the most brave and pious voivode Michael*, well describes its content, though it may have been devised by the publisher rather than the author, who was no longer alive. The genre which I have described as a 'verse chronicle' had a long history in Byzantine and post-Byzantine vernacular writing,¹⁵ a heritage of which Stavrinós was clearly aware. He could also draw upon the genre of vernacular laments, such as those on the fall of Constantinople and other cities.

Stavrinós is not an official court chronicler, even though he writes as an insider, relating events of which he had direct knowledge. As the title indicates and he himself emphasises, his narrative deals strictly with the voivode's 'valiant deeds', omitting a great deal (lines 1295–1298), and he barely touches on aspects of the reign not directly related to military or diplomatic affairs. At times he simplifies complex situations, and he tends to amplify Michael's already remarkable achievements; but in general he gives a reasonable account of events.¹⁶

At the same time, Stavrinós 'translates' his hero into the discourse of myth. Thus, on Michael's assassination the chronicler first gives a factual account, but later re-tells it in mythical terms, presenting the episode as a fight against a personification of Death. The passage is introduced by a dramatic series of 'ill-informed questions', a common pattern in folksongs and related literature. Initially, reflecting both the confusion after Michael's death and the expectations of his followers, the poet asks (lines 1227, 1230–1232):

12 Stoicescu 1971.

13 Mioc in Oțetea 1962, 868.

14 Vincent 1995, 236–238.

15 Vincent 1995, 176–179.

16 See Vincent 1995 and Dinu 2008a, 150–244.

Ἄρα και τι να γίνηκεν αφέντης ο Μιχάλης; [...]
 Αν τύχει πά' στην Ταταριάν, και πολεμά τον Χάνη;
 Αν τύχει πά' στην Μπογδανιάν μόνος χωρίς ανθρώπους;
 Ἢ στην Τουρκιάν απέρασεν, καταπατεί τους τόπους;

What can have happened to lord Michael? / ... Has he gone off to Tartary, to fight the Khan?¹⁷ / Or to Moldavia, alone, without his men? / Or into Turkey, overrunning the land?

The answer comes that Michael has not gone to Tartary, Moldavia or Turkey (lines 1237–1240):

μόνον με δράκον πολεμά στις Τόρτας το λιβάδι,
 οπού 'λθεν και τον έπιασε να τον υπά στον Άδη.
 Όλην την νύκτα πάλευσεν ωςάν ανδρειωμένος,
 και το ταχύ την Κυριακήν ευρέθη νικημένος.

He is on the plain of Turda, fighting a dragon, / which came and seized him to take him to Hades. / All night Michael wrestled like a brave warrior, / but on the Sunday morning, he was found there, defeated.

So Stavrinos assimilates Michael into the world of modern Greek myth, where the hero, often the warrior Digenis, accepts the challenge to a wrestling match with Charos, Death. The assimilation is aided by the fact that the fifteen-syllable verse was the normal metrical form of Greek folksongs, including those about Digenis, and in rhymed couplet form it had been extensively used in fictional or fictionalised narratives. The phrase 'on the plain of Turda' occupies the second half of a line, exactly corresponding to the formula 'on the iron (or 'stone') threshing-floor', the mythical location of the struggle in some folksongs.

At the height of Michael's military success, Stavrinos describes his hero as 'the new Achilles' (line 428). As well as being the protagonist of the medieval Greek *Tale of Achilles*, this hero also features in the *War of Troy* (adapted from a French original) and the much shorter *Tale of Troy*.¹⁸ These and other references suggest that Achilles was widely recognised as an archetypal heroic

17 The Crimean Khanate was an ally of the Ottoman empire.

18 See Beaton 1996, Index.

warrior. For those who know Achilles' story, a sub-text may also come into play, for Achilles was the hero doomed to die prematurely.¹⁹

Later Stavrinos describes Michael as 'the new Belisarius' (line 649), referring to Justinian's general. Belisarius was also the hero of a vernacular narrative poem, which survives in manuscripts and in a popular rhymed version first printed in 1525–1526.²⁰ There is a parallel between the stories of Belisarius and that of Michael, as told by Stavrinos and other chroniclers: both were great military leaders who, according to the authors, became victims of the jealousy (φθόνος) of their powerful contemporaries. Stavrinos does not make the parallel explicit, but it would have been clear to any reader with knowledge of the Belisarius poem. At the end of the chronicle, to remind his readers that death is the common fate of all, even great heroes, Stavrinos mentions Belisarius again, together with Alexander the Great, Solomon and Samson (lines 1271–1274).

The only detailed reference to Greeks in Stavrinos' chronicle is also in a mythologising mode. The author refers to a unit of Greek soldiers (Ρωμαίοι) in Michael's service, 300 in number (note the symbolism). According to Stavrinos they put to flight a vast force, allegedly 12,000 strong, of the sultan's Tartar allies. The words Stavrinos puts into the Greeks' mouths before their attack on the Tartar camp are revealing (lines 151–160):

‘Ας πάμεν μοναχοί μας,
 ή να κερδέσομεν τιμήν ή να χαθεί η ζωή μας!
 Δεν βλέπετ’ ότι βούλονται οι Βλάχοι να μας φάγουν,
 και δια τούτο εδ’ έστειλαν, ημάς διά να πιάσουν;
 Έως πότε να είμεσθεν ‘κ τους Βλάχους οργισμένοι,
 και από μεγάλους και μικρούς να ‘μεσθ’ ονειδισμένοι;
 Αλέξανδρος ο Βασιλιάς όλην την οικουμένη
 με τους Ρωμαίους την όρισεν, διατ’ ήσαν ανδρειωμένοι·
 και ημείς να γένομεν δειλοί, οπίσω να στραφούμεν;
 Αν Μακεδόνες είμασθεν σήμερον ας φανούμεν.’

Let us go alone to either win honour or lose our lives. / Don't you see the Wallachians want to destroy us? / That's why they sent us here, to get us captured. / How much longer are we going to be loathed by the Wallachians, / how much longer to be cursed by great and small? / King Alexander ruled the whole world / with the Greeks' help, for they were

19 On the treatment of Achilles in early modern Greek writing, see Panayotopoulou-Doulaveras 2006.

20 Bakker and van Gemert 1988.

valiant men. / So shall we prove ourselves cowards and turn back? / If we are Macedonians let's show it today!

Stavrinos' version of this event is supported by no documentary source, although there is something similar in a verse chronicle on Michael by Georgios Palamidis;²¹ according to reliable records, the Tartars were defeated, in stages, by forces under local leaders.²² The poet-chroniclers have evidently re-written history for their own purposes.

But the tension itself is well attested, and not only in the armed forces. In gaining the throne Michael had benefited from the support of powerful Greeks in Wallachia and Constantinople, in particular the Kantakouzinou family, a branch of which had regained a prominent position under the Ottomans. At the beginning of his reign Greeks had a prominent role on the princely council. Wallachian magnates felt they were being sidelined, and by men connected, moreover, with the oppressive Ottoman regime. The treaty which the Wallachian delegation signed in 1595 with Sigismund Báthory included a clause excluding Greeks from high office.²³ It appears, though, that reducing the dominance of Greeks in public office was also part of Michael's policy.²⁴ Interestingly, one of the participants in the delegation was the famous Metropolitan of Buzău, Luke the Cypriot.

However, the *voivode* never completely excluded Greeks from his administration and entourage, as indeed Stavrinos' own career shows. Michael's relations with the Kantakouzinou family remained close; one of the most prominent supporters of his anti-Ottoman struggle was the Metropolitan of Veliko Tŭrnovo in Bulgaria, Dionysios Rallis Palaiologos, who was also related to the Kantakouzinou.

Omitting, as he does, this complicated political background, Stavrinos offers no explanation as to why the Greek soldiers should think the Wallachians wanted to destroy them. Probably, as Tudor Dinu has suggested,²⁵ he preferred to remain silent regarding internal conflicts, as his aim was to promote a united Christian front against the Ottomans. His version of the episode serves to remind his compatriots of their illustrious heritage, as well as showing them to have overcome ethnic tensions. In any case, the social and political background falls formally outside Stavrinos' stated topic.

21 Vincent 1995.

22 Dinu 2012a, 377.

23 The original Latin text is in Hurmuzaki 1880, 209–213; the specific clause is on p. 212.

24 Dinu 2008b, 21–22.

25 Dinu 2012a, 378.

The allusion to Alexander the Great, like those to Achilles and Belisarius, probably owes less to formal learning and more to Stavrinos' enthusiastic reading or hearing of earlier vernacular literature. As well as versions of Alexander's life in unrhymed verse circulating in manuscript form, a rhymed version was first printed in 1529 and reprinted for nearly 200 years.²⁶

'Ρωμαίοι' ('Romans', line 168) is the normal term used by Stavrinos and other vernacular writers to refer to Greeks of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period, reflecting of course the Roman origin of the Byzantine empire and the official usage of the emperors themselves in titles such as 'βασιλεὺς καὶ αυτοκράτωρ Ῥωμαίων'. The extension of the term to the ancient Greeks is common in vernacular literature and no doubt in the speech of Stavrinos' time. Strictly speaking, Alexander's troops were 'Ἕλληνες' ('Hellenes'), the term normally reserved, in the early modern vernacular, for Greeks of the pre-Christian era. Stavrinos' choice of 'Ρωμαίοι' stresses the continuity between ancient Greeks and his contemporaries, suggesting identity rather than distance, although the term may not have been consciously selected for this purpose.

His other term for Alexander and his men, 'Μακεδόνες' ('Macedonians'), is the normal term for Alexander's troops in the *Rhyme of Alexander*, together with 'Ἕλληνες'. 'Ρωμαίοι' is not used in that poem. In Stavrinos' day 'Μακεδόνες' could also refer to contemporary Albanians, whether from Albania proper or Albanian communities in what is now Greece, presumably because Albania was once part of the Macedonian state. 'Macedonians', in this sense, feature in Tzanes Koronaïos' poem on Merkourios Bouas (Bua), a Greek-Albanian from Nafplio and commander of a force of *stradiots*, a light cavalry in Venetian service. Bouas' ancestors, we are told, lived in 'Macedonia, Arta and Angelokastro [modern Albanian Gjirokastra], Ioannina and Albania'.²⁷ In Stavrinos' poem it is not clear whether the heroic 300 were actually from Albania or Epirus, as were many stradiots. Maybe he merely wanted to attribute to them a perception of themselves as potential heirs to the military traditions of Alexander and his men.

Stavrinos reveals nothing about his own experience as an officer in Michael's court, except to say, in his brief biographical epilogue, that 'I was his faithful servant, like the others' (line 1296). He mentions his position at court only indirectly, saying that 'Vestiar' was his πινόμι (line 1305), a 'surname' or 'nickname' characteristic of a society where family surnames had not been stabilised.

26 Holton 2002.

27 Sathas 1982, 9; cf. 59, 69, 74, 84 etc. I have not had access to the new edition by Roberta Angiolillo (Alessandria 2013).

As for Michael himself, Stavrinou tells us nothing about his background and his earlier life. We know from other sources that the *voivode*, like many of his predecessors, had spent some time in Constantinople, and had strong connections with the Greek world. About his family origin there is much uncertainty. Some scholars have accepted a view that Michael was the son of Pătrașcu cel Bun ('the Good'), *voivode* from 1553 to 1557, and that Michael's mother, Tudora, was a member of the powerful Kantakouzinos family. This would neatly explain the Kantakouzini's support for Michael. Pătrașcu had only one legitimate child, but, notoriously, several illegitimate offspring, so that Michael's claim was not too implausible. But the theory has been challenged, convincingly in my opinion, by Tudor Dinu.²⁸ He points out that the only records asserting that Michael was Patrascu's son are court chronicles compiled under Michael's supervision. Dinu prefers to give credence to an alternative account which makes Michael the son of a Greek called Giannis from Epirus, a self-made man who attained high office in Wallachia as well as being the representative of the *voivodes* in Constantinople, influential enough to win his son the support of the powerful Kantakouzini.²⁹ Michael and his supporters claimed he was the son of Pătrașcu simply because descent from the voivodal lineage was an essential qualification for any candidate. But this version too has its problems.

In any case, Stavrinou is totally silent on these matters. Conceivably, the chronicler was aware of a family connection but deliberately suppressed the information so as to avoid stigmatising the family by association with Michael's revolt. More probably, I think, Stavrinou was genuinely unaware of any such relationship. When reporting how Hungarian nobles spoke disparagingly of Michael as a mere Wallachian (Βλάχος), he does not question their assertion of Michael's Wallachian identity.³⁰ His adulation of Michael is not overtly based on any sense of ethnic affinity between his hero and the Byzantine or post-Byzantine Greek world.

Stavrinou presents Michael as the natural leader of the Christians of south-eastern Europe. For the chronicler, true to his Byzantine heritage, religion is all-important; ethnicity is not. In speeches, he makes the *voivode* identify

²⁸ Dinu 2008b, 15–21.

²⁹ Dinu 2008, 18.

³⁰ Βλάχος could denote a Wallachian, or any Romanian-speaker, or a Greek Vlach (a member of the Arumunian-speaking communities of central and northern Greece). Also, at least since the time of Anna Comnena, it could denote a transhumant shepherd, without implying a particular ethnicity. In colloquial Greek it can refer to an uncouth 'yokel', and Stavrinou apparently makes his Hungarians play on that usage. See Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, VIII, 3.4 and Vincent 2011, 62–71.

himself exclusively by his religion. The historical Michael did indeed express himself in similar terms. In a letter of 1595 he claims: 'I have done what I have done for the sake of the Christian faith. [...] I have undertaken to commit our poor country to this great task in order to make it a shield for Christendom'.³¹ According to Stavrinos, Michael believed that he was inspired and appointed by God to combat the Turks, even to the point of ordering massacres of non-combattants in Bucharest and elsewhere.³² Stavrinos fully shares this belief; their God was a God of vengeance (lines 61–64):

Είδ' ο θεός την αδικιάν και την στενοχωρίαν
 πογένονταν εις τους πτωχούς εις όλην την Βλαχίαν,
 και νόησιν του έδωκεν τ' αφέντη του Μιχάλη
 τους Τούρκους όλους στο απαθί κι εις θάνατον να βάλει.

God saw the injustice and the misery / imposed upon the poor people
 throughout all Wallachia, / and inspired Lord Michael with the idea / to
 put all the Turks to death by the sword.

Emperor Rudolph, says Stavrinos, gave Michael a mandate 'to expel the Turks, to establish Orthodoxy, that the Christians might be liberated and the church united' (lines 857–858):

να διώξει τους Αγαρηνούς, να στήσ' Ορθοδοξία,
 να λυτρωθούν οι Χριστιανοί, να σμίξ' η εκκλησία.

Stavrinos reports at one point that Michael 'struggled hard to make the church unite, / Rome and Constantinople, to make it one' (lines 1145–1146):

ότι εκόπιαζε πολλά να σμίξει η εκκλησία
 Ρώμης, Κωνσταντινούπολης, να τηνε κάμει μία.

This could imply that he favoured a union of the churches, as had been formulated by the Council of Florence-Ferrara in 1439. But again, there is no documentary evidence. Such a union would have been deeply unpopular both among the Orthodox populations and with the church leaders, such as Meletios Pigas, with whom Michael had good relations. But the voivode certainly did try to unite Orthodox and Catholic forces in a common struggle.

31 Pippidi 1980, 57. Quoted in Vincent 1995, 165.

32 Cf. Dinu 2012a, 374–375.

Stavrinos also reports Michael's aspiration to one day 'attend the liturgy in Agia Sofia': 'κι εθάρρειε να λειτουργηθεί εις την Αγίαν Σοφίαν' (line 1144). Although he stops short of saying that Michael hoped to become emperor, that would be a reasonable assumption from this line.

We are invited, then, to accept that a great Christian leader like Michael could indeed make his country 'a shield for Christendom', and perhaps oust the sultan from his throne, if given proper support by the Christian powers. The chronicler does not discuss what might happen in countries like Wallachia, and in the broader region, *after* a Christian leader succeeded in hearing 'the liturgy in Saint Sophia'. Probably Stavrinos' own background helped in forming this mind-set. As a native of northern Epirus, he was accustomed to a milieu in which speakers of Greek, Vlach and Albanian shared a common Orthodox religious culture under their Ottoman overlords.

However, it is difficult to believe that the omissions were due to ignorance. Stavrinos' reporting of the (imaginary) speech of the heroic Ρωμαίοι implies knowledge of Greek-Wallachian conflicts which he chose not to relate. As a member of Michael's court he must also have been aware of the Wallachian boyars' compact with the prince of Transylvania in 1595, with its clause excluding Greeks from the *voivodes'* council and any other high office. This would presumably have affected the chronicler personally, even though the clause soon came to be disregarded. We might conclude that Stavrinos is less of a 'naive' writer than might appear. By concentrating single-mindedly on the heroic deeds of his prince, he has created an inspiring and cautionary tale of a great leader cut down in his prime by people who should have been his allies.

Stavrinos, as we have seen, is a writer firmly located in the early modern Greek 'popular' tradition, represented by the pseudo-historical *Belisarius* and *Alexander*, as well as the songs of Digenis and other warrior heroes. The Vestiar's remarkable achievement was to assimilate Michael into this tradition almost immediately after the *voivode's* death. The touch of myth in his dramatic account must have enhanced its emotional appeal to a wide readership. His poem unquestionably helped to form the popular image of Michael the Brave and hence to keep alive the belief in a possible Byzantine restoration. Although at least three other verse chronicles on Michael were composed in Greek, including one by Stavrinos' contemporary Georgios Palamidis and an anonymous work discovered by Vicky Doulaveras, these are known from only one manuscript each and probably had very limited circulation compared to the best-seller of 1638.³³

33 On Palamidis see Vincent 1995 and Dinu 2008a. The recently discovered anonymous verse chronicle is presented in Doulaveras 1998, while a further work was lost in a fire on

Matthew, Metropolitan of Myra

The second part of the 1638 volume begins with a continuation of Stavrinos' chronicle, by Matthew, titular Metropolitan of Myra, also in rhymed couplets of fifteen-syllable verse.³⁴ The title page indicates a more general history, not focused on a single personality: *A second history of events in Wallachia, from voivode [Radu] Șerban to voivode Gabriel [Movilă], the present duke*. The *History* actually begins with a Proem (Προόμιον), in forty-four lines, dedicated to Ioannis Katritzis (Ianachi Catargi), a spectacular example of the Greek ascendancy in Wallachia; Ioannis had married into the Buzescu family of great boyars and officials, had seen his daughter married to the *voivode* Alexandru Iliăș, and from August 1618 to July 1620 held for the second time the position of Grand Ban of Craiova, second only in importance to that of *voivode*.³⁵ Then follows a section of forty lines under the title *On Friendship*, which also includes a brief explanation of the rationale of Matthew's chronicle. The *History* proper takes up the next 1240 lines. It is followed by two further verse texts, also by the Metropolitan: they are a compilation of *Advice* to the *voivode* Alexandru Iliăș 'and his successors',³⁶ and a *Lament* on the Fall of Constantinople,³⁷ inserted as a 'digression' towards the end of the *Advice*.³⁸ The texts were originally independent of each other, and were written at different times; Alexandru Iliăș gained the throne in 1616 but was deposed by a coup the next year, while Gabriel Movilă reigned from 1618 to 1620.³⁹

Matthew, titular Metropolitan of Myra and author of the works in the second part of the 1638 volume, was yet another example of the talented Greeks who found careers in Wallachia. A native of Epirus like Stavrinos, well educated, he had established himself in the church hierarchy and had travelled widely in eastern Europe, acquiring a knowledge of Church Slavonic. Matthew settled in Wallachia in the early years of the 17th century, and became abbot of the important monastery of Dealu, near the old capital Târgoviște, where he

Mount Athos (Vincent 1995, 171 n. 1). For Greek and Bulgarian folksongs on Michael see Oikonomidis 1952; also Legrand 1881, lxxxii-lxxxiii. For a Romanian ballad see, e. g., Anon. 1998, 251-254.

34 Matthew's texts in the 1638 volume are published in Legrand 1881, 231-333. For further discussion of their date, background and the genres they represent, see Vincent 1998.

35 Stoicescu 1971, 147.

36 1092 lines, i.e. lines 1325-2320 and 2765-2860 in Legrand's (1881) continuous numeration.

37 444 lines, i.e. Legrand 1881, lines 2321-2764.

38 Since there are also bridging and introductory passages, which could be assigned in more than one way, these figures are not precise.

39 Giurescu 1972, 413.

remained until his death in 1624.⁴⁰ Matthew was a distinguished copyist and illustrator of religious manuscripts, which, despite the establishment of printing, were still in demand. At Dealu he had a scriptorium producing luxury texts in Greek and Slavonic.⁴¹

The Metropolitan's persona as a writer is quite different from that of Stavrinos. Allusions to popular literature or oral poetry are barely present, if at all, in his work. He speaks, as one might expect, as a pious and learned Orthodox churchman, frequently quoting religious texts and examples. For him, the value of history is in its lessons that can lead to the soul's salvation as well as inspiring wisdom and valour, 'like great Homer, who relates to us the achievements of the Hellenes (Ελλήνων, line 74)'. His language, however, is vernacular, not ecclesiastical Greek. Elements of ecclesiastical language appear in passages of theological content, but otherwise his register is not greatly different from that of Stavrinos. His verse is fluent and he frequently achieves an apt, colloquial turn of phrase, as we will see in the examples below.

Matthew's history chronicles events in Wallachia from soon after Michael's death up to 1618. He endorses, no doubt with resignation, the role of Turkish vassal adopted by Radu Mihnea. He notes with approval how one of Radu Mihnea's successors, Gabriel Movilă, refused to accept the throne without first securing the sultan's support. He makes Gabriel decline with the words: 'I can't live in a house that is not mine' (Σε ξένο σπίτι δεν μπορώ ποτέ να κατοικήσω, line 805). Matthew is not pro-Ottoman, but his view of the situation is, on this point, simply realistic.

In his *History*, Matthew deals at some length with relations between ethnic communities in Wallachia.⁴² He describes the failed plot by a magnate called Bărcan, who conspired with others to assassinate Radu Mihnea, put their own protégé in his place, and then annihilate the Greek merchants (lines 390–400). A few years later a court official, the *mare vornik* (μέγας βόρνικος) Kristas, who according to Matthew was a Greek from Roumeli (lines 821–822), made some public statement (εδημηγόρησε, line 823) that enraged his audience, and a mob attacked him with sticks.⁴³ Kristas took cover under an old bed (παλαιοκρέβατον) (!), and had to be rescued by Gabriel Movilă, who had

40 Matthew's work has received comparatively little scholarly attention. See Vincent 1998, with bibliography. For more recent discussions, see Pidonia 2004; Panou 2006, 75–85 and 2007, 102–104; Kaklamanis 2008, 111–113; and Dinu 2012a.

41 See Gratziou 1982.

42 See now Panou 2006, 75–85, in addition to the material in Vincent 1998.

43 Stoicescu 1971, 123–124, identifies Kristas with the Cîrstea who is recorded in documents as *mare vornic* from 7 January 1614 to 13 March 1615 and from 3 October 1616 to 8 December

been acclaimed as *voivode* but not confirmed (so the incident can be dated to 1616). Kristas' attackers are simply described as 'they' (κείνων, line 823) and 'the people' (του λαού, line 825). Presumably they were Wallachian magnates and/or their supporters in the anti-Greek party. This interpretation is supported by the next lines of the *History*, where Matthew describes a similar incident involving another official, with the Byzantine title of λογοθέτης (*logofăt*) and the Greek-sounding name of Nikas.⁴⁴ He was set upon by 'all the youths' (ὅλα τα παλληκάρια, line 832), and was rescued by a servant.

Then in 1616, early in the reign of Alexandru Iliăș, Matthew relates how a new conspiracy was formed among the powerful of the land (άρχοντες) with the aim once more of destroying the hated Greeks, who had become an elite among the elite, 'for all those great and powerful men, / they all were Greeks, lording it over them' (lines 857–858):

διότι ὅλ' οἱ ἄρχοντες ἐκεῖνοι οἱ μεγάλοι,
ὅλοι Ρωμαῖοι ἤσανε ἀπάνω τοὺς κεφάλι.

Yet the divide was not quite exclusively between Greeks and natives, for one of the main conspirators was Kristas himself. This plot also failed; some conspirators fled to Transylvania, while the others received a pardon. Later, on returning from a military campaign on behalf of the sultan, Alexandru executed Kristas and other plotters. So from being a member of the powerful Greek group at the voivode's court, Kristas seems to have gone over to the conspirators' side. The dates of documents listed by Stoicescu are consistent with Matthew's account, but with further sources unavailable, it is impossible at present to elucidate this odd affair.

The conflict did not end with the executions. One of the leaders of the second conspiracy, a boyar and court officer called Lupu Mehedințeanu, raised a military force in Transylvania, and advanced with it into Wallachia. Alexandru's troops, with their salaries deep in arrears, refused to fight, and the *voivode* fled with his family (lines 957–1044). Lupu seized power, and subjected the Greeks to a reign of terror, which Matthew describes in detail. Matthew himself was forced to flee from his monastery and go into hiding. The whole episode bears

1617. Matthew of Myra is Stoicescu's source on Kristas' origin and his near-lynching which we place in 1616.

44 According to Stoicescu (1971, 219) this is Nicu din Corcova, recorded as *mare logofăt* (for the second time) from 3 October 1616 to 18 May 1618. Stoicescu considers his Greek background uncertain, although it seems to me clearly implied by Matthew. The Metropolitan is mentioned by Stoicescu as his source for the attack on Nikas.

witness to an extreme animosity, which must have been building up during the reigns of Radu Șerban and Radu Mihnea.

The Sultan finally restored ‘normality’ by appointing Gabriel Movilă as *voivode*, backed by a large Ottoman military force. Gabriel, says Matthew, made a point of ‘appointing to all the high offices of state people worthy of such honour, and creating native leaders from the territory’ (lines 1244–1246):

όσοι είναι άξιοι τιμής, αυτούς να διατάξει
απάνω στα οφφίκια όλα της αφεντείας,
να κάμει άρχους τοπικούς από της επαρχίας.

And so, for the time being, a balance was found. Greeks retained, or soon regained, no doubt, their prominent position in commerce and the church.

After narrating the first conspiracy, Matthew has advice for both parties.⁴⁵ The Wallachians must learn to respect the Greeks, he says, for (lines 415–418):

ότ' είναι γένος άγιον, γένος ευλογημένον,
γένος ορθοδοξότατον, απ' όλους τιμημένον·
αυτοί 'ναι όπ' εγέμισαν τον κόσμον με σοφίαν,
με γράμματα, με άρματα και με θεολογίαν.

They are a holy race, a blessed race, / a race most Orthodox, whom all revere, / for it was they who filled the world with wisdom, / with arms and letters and theology.

Once again, like Stavrinos, Matthew uses the term ‘Ρωμαίοι’ both for the ancient Greeks and for his own contemporaries, emphasising a sense of continuity between ancient and recent times. His only uses of Έλληνες are in line 74 of the *History*, quoted above, and in the *Lament* at line 2361, where he associates το γένος των Ελλήνων, ‘the race of Hellenes’ with το γένος των Ρωμαίων mentioned two lines earlier.

But the Greeks too in Wallachia, according to Matthew, need to change their ways: you Greek magnates, he says (I paraphrase), whether in court or in commerce, you must curb your insatiable greed; for I see you lording it over the poor Wallachians, and it is your greed that makes them enemies of the Greeks, so that they cannot bear the sight of you, not even in a picture (και δεν μπορούν να σας ιδούν ουδέ ζωγραφισμένους, line 435). For these people are our livelihood, and ‘whether they like it or not, they call us “master”’ (θέλοντες και μη θέλοντες,

45 See the important discussion on this passage in Panou 2006, 80–84.

‘ζουπούνουλε’ μας κράζουν, line 442). Matthew’s choice of words neatly reflects the position of Greeks in Wallachian society: they regarded themselves and were regarded as a group apart from and above the peasant majority. In the first part of the passage he uses the accusatory second person plural, dissociating himself from these Greeks who abuse their position in Wallachia; later as we saw, he includes himself: ‘they call *us* master’. As abbot of Dealu, he was indeed part of this Greek elite.

In his poem of *Advice* to the *voivode*, which follows his *History*, Matthew lays down guidelines for a ruler to develop a Christian principality, preserving many aspects of the empire of New Rome. Such works had a long history in Byzantium, and in Wallachia had a distinguished precedent in the *Teachings* attributed to the *voivode* Neagoe Basarab (1512–1521) and addressed to his son.⁴⁶ In Matthew’s poem there are no references to Wallachian-Greek relations which, as we saw, he treats in detail in the *History*. Nor are there direct references to relations with the Ottoman regime. Matthew’s comments on foreign affairs are little more than a reminder to the *voivode* to keep the peace with all his neighbours and to keep them friendly with gifts, remembering that their intentions may be hostile and rapacious ‘for they are faithless, heretics, Lutherans, non-Christians, and tyrants too’ (lines 1499–1500). But despite the comparative absence of Ottomans, his model for a post-Byzantine, quasi-Byzantine state foreshadows, in part, the Phanariot era. What he promotes is a kind of enlightened autocracy. Whether described as Lord (αυθέντης) or King (βασιλιάς or ρήγας), the *voivode* will be head of state, highest judge and also, as Matthew has shown elsewhere, chief of the army.

Matthew emphasises that the *voivodes* are Orthodox monarchs (βασιλείς ορθόδοξοι, line 1765), who must respect and honour the Orthodox Church. This topic, in various aspects, takes up a large part of the *Advice*. Matthew reminds his readers that the church is a ‘major support of the monarchy’ (στηριγμός μέγας της βασιλείας, line 1773). Nonetheless, for Matthew, the *voivode* is a lay ruler, and he must not intervene in church matters, such as the election of bishops. The Metropolitan’s use of the terms βασιλείς and βασιλεία in such passages links his ideal *voivode* directly to Byzantine imperial tradition, where the same terms are used of the emperors. But although the *voivode* is an absolute ruler, Matthew emphasises that he must deal fairly with all his subjects, and must never break an oath or renege on agreements or contracts. And he must

46 See Vincent 1998, 316–319, with references given there, and Panou 2007, 83–84.

take advice from his princely council which, typically, Matthew refers to by a slightly hellenised version (σφάτον) of its Romanian name, *sfat*.⁴⁷

On matters of law, Matthew advises the prince that in cases involving a possible death sentence, the *voivode* must follow the 'laws of the empire' (νόμοι της Βασιλείας, line 1419), in other words Byzantine law. This is in accord with the practice of translating (both literally and metaphorically) Byzantine law into Slavonic for use in the Romanian lands. Typical, perhaps, is the fifteenth-century Codex of Bistrița, which contains the *Syntagma* of Matthaios Vlastaris (Blastares, Βλαστάρης), together with the law-code (*Zakonik*) of the Serbian tsar Stefan Dušan (itself based on Byzantine models) and extracts from Justinian. But for less grave matters, Matthew of Myra advises the *voivode* to refer to the *legea țerei*, literally 'the law of the land', the local customary law, for which the Metropolitan uses the Romanian term (lines 1417–1424). He warns that judgments *not* made on this basis may be challenged.

Matthew recommends that the *voivode* set up a college, a σπουδαστήριον. The revenues of a whole village should be dedicated to the needs of the institution and its students. The situation was dire. 'Priests', he claims, 'don't know how to baptise, / don't know the prayers for the holy liturgy' (lines 2201–2202). Without a college, he warns, Wallachia will soon have no priests, no secretaries, no financial officers. It is, he says, the only country in which such an institution does not exist. Matthew foreshadows the concern of later Phanariot rulers for the princely academies in Bucharest and Iași. However, he does not indicate what should be the languages of teaching, or what other languages should be taught.

Like his other two texts, Matthew's *Lament on Constantinople* belongs to a genre well-established in vernacular Greek literature,⁴⁸ although, as we will see, the Metropolitan goes well beyond merely lamenting the fall of the empire. On the issue of restoring Byzantium, Matthew clarifies his position at the start, using once again the inclusive first person plural. 'We wretched Greeks (ἡμεῖς οἱ ταπεινοὶ Ρωμαῖοι)', he says, lost the empire because of our stupidity and because of our 'wrongdoing and vanity' (line 2317–2319). But in a passage foreshadowing Byron's 'Trust not for freedom to the Franks', he ridicules those who look for 'saviours' from outside (lines 2325–2334):

47 At line 116, Legrand (1881) has the meaningless word εφάτον, which forces him to make an emendation for the sake of the metre. The correct reading is clearly σφάτον, which produces a metrically correct line.

48 Vincent 1998, 221–223.

φορούν τον όσοι μυελά έχουν εις το κεφάλι,
 κι ημείς το θάρρος έχομεν εις τον ντελή Μιχάλη,
 να το εβγάλει με σπαθί κι εμάς να μας το δώσει —
 ουαί σ' ημάς, αφέντη μου, με την ολίγη γνώση!
 όπ' έχομεν το θάρρος μας μέσα εις την Σπανίαν,
 κι εις τα χοντρά τα κάτεργα που 'ναι στην Βενετίαν,
 να έλθουσι με το σπαθί τον Τούρκον να σκοτώσουν,
 να πάρουν το βασιλειον κι εμάς να μας το δώσουν·
 ελπίζομεν και εις ξανθά γένη να μας γλυτώσουν,
 να 'λθούν από τον Μόσχοβον, να μας ελευθερώσουν!

[The crown] is for people with brains in their head; / but we put our trust
 in crazy Michael, / to win the crown by the sword and hand it to us! / Alas
 for us, my lord, in our ignorance! / And then we go and put our trust in
 Spain / and in the warships Venice has at hand, / to come here with their
 swords and kill the Turks, / conquer the empire and restore it to us! / We
 hope for the fair-haired races to rescue us, / to come from Muscovy and
 liberate us!

So in contrast to Stavrinou, Matthew sees 'Crazy Michael' as an outsider, on
 a level with the Spanish, the Venetians, and even the Orthodox Muscovites.
 Attachment to Orthodoxy was not sufficient, for the Metropolitan, to qualify a
 leader to be a potential liberator of Byzantium.

So what, if any, solution can Matthew offer? His approach is in many ways
 the opposite of Stavrinou's. The learned churchman is aware, with the aid of
 hindsight, that Michael's revolt could not have succeeded in the long term. He
 appears more realistic than Stavrinou, though on reaching the *Lament*, the last
 major section of the book, we see that his viewpoint is not political but theo-
 logical—as indeed we should expect. Matthew believes, like many in his day,
 that the Ottoman conquest was a divine punishment; he exhorts his people
 to pray for forgiveness and for deliverance or, at least, to make the Ottoman
 regime easier to bear and to give the subject people strength to bear it (lines
 2472–2698). But as an alternative, Matthew begs the deity to let the Ottomans
 see the light and become Christians (lines 2699–2764)! He is aware, of course,
 that Muslims accept much of the Judeo-Christian tradition, although they re-
 gard Jesus not as divine, but as a prophet (lines 2513, 2519–2521). Islam, for the
 Metropolitan, is technically a heresy which with divine help could be over-
 come, like many earlier heresies.

Conclusion

Although on the issue of restoration Matthew can see no hope in ‘outsiders’ like Michael, unlike Stavrinou he does address the issues of ‘Byzance après Byzance’. He tries to offer a recipe for a state which would be heir to the Byzantine heritage in Romanian lands, while allowing for local traditions. So the volume as a whole offers two totally different views of the issues of Byzantine restoration and post-Byzantine continuity. It would be worth making a systematic study of its reception, examining if possible what audiences it reached, and which parts of it seem to have made the most impression.

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Yeats's Two Byzantiums

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Yeats—the greatest twentieth-century poet in English—wrote two famous poems about Byzantium and famously discussed Byzantium in his theory of history, *A Vision*.¹ These have all been much discussed by Yeatsians,² and more recently by a Byzantinist,³ on a general assumption that each poem sees Byzantium as a unified or ideal state, and that the poem itself is either unified or holds internal conflicts in a satisfying tension to express a coherent system of thought. While Yeatsians have emphasized the ideal or symbolic nature of Yeats's Byzantium, they have largely accepted that his secondary reading and visits to Italy have given it historicity: as G. S. Fraser put it, 'every detail is right'.⁴ In discussing the 'date' in which each poem is set, they have been equally happy to accept Yeats's vague positioning of at least one 'towards the end of the first Christian millennium'.⁵ They pay close attention to the golden bird in each poem,⁶ and place its fashioning in the reign of Theophilos, yet show no interest in the fact that Theophilos was the last iconoclastic emperor,⁷ or that his

1 Yeats 1937/1938.

2 Especially in the 1950s and 1960s, when they were intensively and extensively discussed.

3 Sjösvärd 2014. He discusses a second short poem, *Wisdom*, but not *Byzantium* on the grounds that it is too obscure. I am not considering *Wisdom* because it is so hybrid in its references.

4 Fraser 1970a, 129.

5 One school of thought sets *Sailing to Byzantium* in the early 6th century, following Yeats's famous aside in *A Vision*, Yeats 1937/1938, 279: 'I think if I could be given a month of Antiquity ... I would spend it in Byzantium a little before Justinian opened St. Sophia and closed the Academy of Plato.' Others place both poems in the late 10th century because they both contain the golden bird and tree of Theophilos, although Finneran's choice of c. 900 seems arbitrary (Finneran 1970b, 4), an awkward compromise between Theophilos's dates (r. 829–842), and Yeats's vague 'toward the end of the first Christian millennium'. My own view is that Yeats's sense of cultural change was more acute than his historical precision – his system in *A Vision* tweaked his chronology – and that Ricks 2000, 231, was right to see his second indication of period 'as a piece of number symbolism'.

6 Ellmann 1961, 258, calls it the 'symbol of the reconciliation of opposites'; Wilson 1958, 238, 'the purified soul'.

7 I use the term 'iconoclast' because it is familiar but, as Brubaker (2010, 323) reminds us, the Byzantines themselves used the term 'iconomachy' or image-struggle for the period generally referred to in English as iconoclasm.

golden tree and mechanical singing birds were among the signature features of a cultural shift under iconoclasm away from sacred human images towards the decorative arts, including the mechanical inventions, of the Caliphate.⁸ Yeats, for all his vagueness about dates,⁹ was more interested in this change than his critics. I will put a case that in both poems Yeats is drawn—at some indeterminate level of awareness—to antithetical Byzantiums, the iconodule and the iconoclast, approaching the second, which he favours, through the portal of the first.

If Yeats's attraction to his imaginary Byzantiums was ambivalent and antithetical, so were his poetry and his life. The title of his greatest long poem marks the ambivalence: *Meditations in Time of Civil War*. He was Anglo-Irish, the son of an argumentative painter who thrived in London, and a silent mother who loved the 'ghost and fairy stories' of her native Sligo.¹⁰ He was schooled in both Ireland and England. His long passion for the Irish nationalist Maud Gonne made him an activist, yet by temperament he was a dreamer. Yeats was mentor to Synge and helped establish the Abbey Theatre and a national drama. He promoted the 'Celtic Revival' and drew on Irish mythology and ghost stories in his poetry and plays, but his great collaborator was Lady Gregory, the Anglo-Irish aristocrat and land-owner. He lived in London and Dublin as well as Galway. He was an autodidact heavily influenced by Plotinus,¹¹

8 Brett 1954, 482–483, gave a full account of the sources for Abbasid influence over this particular automaton, including the visit of Byzantine envoys to the Caliph's court in Baghdad in 917, where they saw just such a golden tree with mechanical singing birds. Gibbon (1788/1995, 3.52.345; 3.53.392–393) ascribed the tree and birds to a comprehensive palace-construction by Theophilos in direct imitation of the Caliph's palace. The Byzantine chronological tradition firmly places the golden tree in which mechanized birds sit singing in the reign of Theophilos: Symeon the Logothete gives one early description, Symeoni Magistri et Logothetae *Chronicon* 130.8 (Wahlgren 2006, 218), and a near-identical account appears in the Bonn Georgius Monachus continuatus *Life of Theophilos*, 5 (Bekker 1838, 173). Theophanes continuatus 4.21 (Bekker 1838, 793) recounts the melting down of the 'famous' golden tree and accompanying lions in the reign of Theophilos's son, the iconodule Michael II, while *The Book of Ceremonies* 2.15 (trans. Moffatt and Tall, 569), indicates, in its description of a golden tree and mechanized singing birds as part of an elaborate ceremonial display to foreign dignitaries, that the tree had been reconstructed by the time of Constantine VII.

9 And other references: 'I have read somewhere that in the Emperor's palace at Byzantium was a tree made of gold and silver, and artificial birds that sang'. Yeats 1957, 825.

10 Ellmann 1961, 24.

11 See, among many examples, Wilson's analysis (1958, 231–243) of Yeats's 'Platonic reminiscence' and eclectic use of symbols in the poem *Byzantium*. But Yeats himself often referred to these influences in his poetry and prose.

an internationalist, an intellectual fashionista excited by theosophy and ritual communications with the dead. When his wife proved an adept at automatic writing and spirit-channelling, he spent two years transcribing otherworldly messages that became the elaborate, idiosyncratic theory of history in *A Vision*. Byzantium takes pride of place in this theory, as the culture which at one stage of its history achieved what Yeats considered Unity of Being.

But that stage was a brief one: 'a little before Justinian opened St. Sophia and closed the academy of Plato',¹² as he put it in a much-quoted aside. His long view showed a series of civilizations giving way to one another in a mutually inverse progress pictured as a diagram of intersecting cones; there was continual readjustment of such antitheses as social order and upheaval, dream or passion versus reason. Yeats liked to track these changes in aesthetic terms: so, when Classical Greek statues with their painted eyes gave way to drilled eye-holes in Roman statues, it seemed to him that the 'administrative mind ... had driven out rhythm ... [and] uncommitted energy'.¹³ Then he saw Byzantine ivories as reversing the antitheses in a new way.

When I think of Rome I see always those heads with their world-considering eyes ... and compare in my imagination vague Grecian eyes gazing at nothing, Byzantine eyes of drilled ivory staring upon a vision ...¹⁴

Drilled ivory—looking different from drilled stone—showed the irrational re-entering history as 'Egyptian thaumaturgy and the Judaeian miracle',¹⁵ creating its own tension with Roman order and administration. Yeats saw Constantine 'as half statesman, half thaumaturgist': for 'civilization was antithetical still'; 'the world became Christian ... by an act of power'.¹⁶

All around [Divine revelation] is an antithetical aristocratic civilisation ... hierarchical ... all dependent on a few, up to the Emperor himself, who is a God dependent upon a greater God ... and floating over all, the Romanised Gods of Greece.¹⁷

¹² Yeats 1937/1938, 279.

¹³ Yeats 1937/1938, 276.

¹⁴ Yeats 1937/1938, 277.

¹⁵ Yeats 1937/1938, 278.

¹⁶ Yeats 1937/1938, 278.

¹⁷ Yeats 1937/1938, 277.

During iconoclastic movements in the 8th and 9th centuries, however: 'we may see ... a destruction of what was Greek in decoration accompanied perhaps by a renewed splendour in all that came down from the ancient Persian Paradise'.¹⁸

Yeats interprets the 'renewed splendour' as:

that decoration which seems to undermine our self-control, and is, it seems, of Persian origin, and has for its appropriate symbol a vine whose tendrils climb everywhere and display among their leaves ... strange images of birds and beasts.¹⁹

And, in the long period after icons were restored, he finds a loss of vital power in the specifically Byzantine imagination: 'the return of the images may, as I see things, have been the failure of synthesis ... and the first sinking-in and dying-down of Christendom into the heterogeneous loam'.²⁰

All this may seem fanciful and unscholarly but it feeds into the two mature poems, *Sailing to Byzantium* and *Byzantium*. Together, they give form to themes not wholly satisfied by Irish oral tradition or his own mixed culture: strange images of social order and tumult, a different traffic with unquiet ghosts, more powerful invocations of the numinous in dialogues with the self. In his ideas of Byzantium he found access to an eclectic and far-reaching past whose images and echoes seemed closer to the Anima Mundi than his own.

*Sailing to Byzantium*²¹ is seen as illuminating an ideal: in Ellmann's words, 'the holy city of the imagination'.²² The poem 'is full of echoes of Yeats' other works ... In a sense he had been writing it all his life'.²³ Most Yeatsians see the poem as well as its Byzantium as ultimately unified, if only through tension or

18 Yeats 1937/1938, 282.

19 Yeats 1937/1938, 281.

20 Yeats 1937/1938, 282.

21 The poem went through many drafts. Bradford assigns these a provisional order around 'a typescript version of the poem corrected in Yeats's hand and dated 26 September 1926'; 'his own dating of the finished poem is 1927'. Bradford 1960, 111 and 116.

22 Ellmann 1961, 257. There are many such formulations. Byzantium in this poem represents an 'ideal image of unity of being', Melchiori 1970a, 69; 'an imagined land where unity of being has permeated an entire culture', Bradford 1960, 110; 'the world of intellect and the spirit', Wilson 1958, 231. Byzantium's art is made 'a symbol for Art itself', Gordon and Fletcher 1961, 135. In the poem *Byzantium*, Byzantium has been re-imagined as 'the life after death', Wilson 1958, 231, yet retains its unity of being. 'In this later Byzantium unity of being is threatened ... [but] miraculously restored when the symbolic dolphins carry the souls of the dead to a Yeatsian paradise ... at once sensual and spiritual.' Bradford 1960, 111.

23 Ellmann 1961, 257–258.

paradox²⁴ or 'symbiosis'.²⁵ Certainly, the poem moves in one direction, carried by the voice, in what seems a clear argument: the speaker has no place among the procreating young; he repudiates his own old body; he travels in spirit to Byzantium where the numinous is even more powerful than the iconic that defines it; and he commands it to refashion him as an instrument of song. Yet in this poem of repudiation and longing, there are tensions which remain unresolved and some are unacknowledged. Four stanzas give us four disjunct states, linked only by rhetorical transition. The first denounces seasonal generation:

That is no country for old men. The young
 In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
 —Those dying generations—at their song,
 The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
 Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
 Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
 Caught in that sensual music, all neglect
 Monuments of unageing intellect.

The music may be exquisite, but the cosmic pattern is impersonal. The young are dying as they breed. There *is* no old age in this cosmos except in the voice, so strong in anger and regret.

Stanza 2 sets old age implicitly against youth but more aggressively against itself.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
 A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
 Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
 For every tatter in its mortal dress,
 Nor is there singing school but studying
 Monuments of its own magnificence;
 And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
 To the holy city of Byzantium.

24 From oppositions between life and art, change and permanence etc., Yeats makes a 'synthesis of ... elements into a paradoxical structure', Unterecker 1959, 124; 'a *system* of tensions', Henn 1965, 228; mutual *dependence*, Zwerdling 1960, 85–86; *fusion*, Engelberg 1964, 146; *resolution* through the intensity with which antitheses are stated, Fraser 1970a, 136. Of Yeats's eclectic symbolic references: 'how extensive and rich a substance Yeats was able to *synthesize* into the poetry of both his Byzantium pieces.' Gwynn 1953, 40. (My italics).

25 Vendler's term for the more problematic oppositions in *Byzantium*: Vendler 1963, 142.

There seems to be no passage from youth to this version of age—it is already disembodied. The self is represented by the voice, which makes the linkways between stanzas. ‘*That is no country ... all neglect ... And therefore I have sailed the seas and come ...*’

The triumphant ‘therefore’ fuels the powerful invocation in stanza 3:

O sages standing in God’s holy fire
 As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
 Come from the holy fire, *perne* in a gyre,
 And be the singing-masters of my soul.
 Consume my heart away; sick with desire
 And fastened to a dying animal
 It knows not what it is; and gather me
 Into the artifice of eternity.

Yet stanzas 3 and 4 are otherwise as disjunct as the first. They invoke not one Byzantium but two. Stanza 3 addresses an iconodule Byzantium and stanza 4 the iconoclastic empire of Theophilos. In 3, Byzantium is imagined as a purgatorial process through three verbs in mounting sequence:²⁶

Come from the holy fire, *perne* in a gyre,
 And *be* the singing-masters of my soul.

In this climactic stanza, the power of the invocation dramatizes—or projects—the enduring power and presence of the more than human. The sages standing in God’s holy fire bypass even their incandescent images—yet the speaker calls them up *within* the culture that enshrines those images. The numinous is inseparable in the speaker’s mind from the mosaic that gives them form. It is the specifically Byzantine legacy, its images and the iconodule belief system, that make possible the transcendent energy of that invocation.

Then what of Stanza 4?

Once out of nature I shall never take
 My bodily form from any natural thing,
 But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
 Of hammered gold and gold enamelling

26 Sjösvärd 2014, 242, is, in my opinion, quite mistaken when he argues that ‘*perne*’ should be taken as a noun here. It declares itself a verb: in Yeats’s poetry, the rhythm is definitive.

To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
 Or set upon a golden bough to sing
 To lords and ladies of Byzantium
 Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

This frames a different social order—something between dreaming and nirvana. While both images, in stanzas 3 and 4, might seem ‘sheer miracle to the multitude’,²⁷ they are mutually exclusive. How reasonably might these sages, seen as icons, deliver a purged supplicant as a gizmo to an iconoclastic emperor? In this final stanza, the voice is muted, tamed: the music is the hammering of goldsmiths; the visual and tactile beauty of the golden bird—the enduring image—seduces drowsy emperor *and* reader into a kind of trance. The gift of prophecy becomes redundant. The human voice, become wordless instrument, dies into silence. The bird’s song is mechanical, an echo.

It is immaterial whether Yeats had it consciously in mind that the emperor associated with the golden birds was an iconoclast: in this final stanza he is drawn to the art of the period he had imagined as iconoclast in *A Vision*. The stark change in mood, idea and reference between the two stanzas matches the historical shift as he had configured it, towards ‘that decoration which ... is, it seems, of Persian origin, and has for its appropriate symbol a vine whose tendrils climb everywhere and display among their leaves ... strange images of birds and beasts ...’. Though re-appropriated by the post-iconoclastic emperors in a context of elaborate pomp, the golden bird set on a golden branch was part of Theophilus’s cultural apparatus and it is towards that apparatus that Yeats’s imagination has moved.

Yeats was always in dialogue with himself, or with different versions of himself, seeking to transform them into something other and timeless. Byzantium in both its contradictory phases represents something transformative, an immolation in which the troublesome self—or selves—can be refined, divested, reconstituted in its images and echoes. Both images in *Sailing to Byzantium* encapsulate versions of the timeless. The sages have passed beyond mortality, as in a mosaic; the artefact transmutes human yearnings into something indifferent and other, something fixed; but they are separate, even opposed.

The transformative, for Yeats, seeks balance (‘A waste of breath the years behind / In balance with this life, this death.’).²⁸ Iconodulism provided balance more or less directly. In the first of the two poems, ‘As in’ is the fulchrum:

27 Yeats, *Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen* (Finneran 1984, 206).

28 Yeats, *An Irish Airman Foresees his Death* (Finneran 1984, 135).

between the terror of the saints coming *from* the fire and their fixed imaginary intensity '*in* the gold mosaic of a wall'. And, as the near-refrain of *Easter 1916* indicates ('All changed, changed utterly: / A terrible beauty is born'), the terror is a precondition of the beauty.

Iconoclasm may, however, tip the balance towards dream or the overwhelming and, with the final muting of the human in *Sailing to Byzantium*, the terror goes, and leaves only the dream. It is an incomplete version of iconoclastic dominion, almost a flirtation. In *Byzantium*,²⁹ however, he allows the iconomachic energy to arrive in full destructive force. Again, the poem works from the imperial grandeur of fixed symbols; again the human is superseded by non-human images, and yet, as dream becomes hallucination and the mind an echo-chamber, there is no loss of fleshly feeling. Balance may now be called precarious 'self-control'.

Because the voice is so important in Yeats's poetry, so is the echo. In his late poem, *Man and the Echo*, the speaker, standing at the bottom of a chasm, 'shout[s] a secret to the stone' in a tirade of self-accusation and despair. 'All that I have said and done / Now that I am old and ill ...'. By sending back his closing phrase, the echo recharges the poem rhythmically, arousing him to new oration. Again the echo mocks him, and he cries,

O rocky voice ...
What do we know but that we face
One another in this place?³⁰

It is the echo he is facing and speaking to. And, in a strange consonance with the *Byzantium* poems, it is a rabbit's cry that distracts him, not a human.

In *Byzantium* the social order is invoked through the word 'Emperor' but invested in 'the great cathedral gong'. The echoing gong connects the two aspects of *Byzantium*, the forces of Graeco-Roman hierarchy and the mystical.³¹ This

29 In response to Sturge Moore's letter (16 April 1930) criticizing *Sailing to Byzantium*, Yeats produced 'the original prose version of *Byzantium* on 30th April 1930, almost immediately on receiving Moore's letter; he had a complete version done by 11th June'. Bradford 1960, 118. He published the final version the same year.

30 Yeats (Finneran 1984, 345–346).

31 Wilson 1958, 231–243 long ago showed how this poem draws on Yeats's complex repertoire of symbols from mystical and other sources. That the gong sounding from the church also conveyed news of the imperium is illustrated in a story by Attaleiates about Nikephoros Phokas, who built a church where he was encamped during his reconquest of Crete: 'He ordered the wooden gong to be struck that called everyone to prayer. When the inhabitants of the city heard the sound of the wood, they marveled at the speed and intensity of the construction as well as at the sound of the trumpets that introduced the liturgy.'

poem too is full of verbal echoes of Yeats's other poems. *Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen* (about the Irish Civil War) has 'drunken soldiery'³² and 'miracle'. *All Souls Night* begins with 'the great Christ Church bell'. Its speaker is 'Wound in mind's pondering, / As mummies in the mummy-cloth are wound', a prelude to communing with his dead.³³ *Byzantium* takes that further, towards communion with the dead unknown.³⁴

The unpurged images of day recede;
 The Emperor's drunken soldiery are abed;
 Night resonance recedes, night-walkers' song
 After great cathedral gong;
 A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains
 All that man is,
 All mere complexities,
 The fury and the mire of human veins.

Before me floats an image, man or shade,
 Shade more than man, more image than a shade;
 For Hades' bobbin, bound in mummy-cloth
 May unwind the winding path;
 A mouth that has no moisture and no breath
 Breathless mouths may summon;
 I hail the superhuman;
 I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.

Miracle, bird or golden handiwork,
 More miracle than bird or handiwork,
 Planted on the starlit golden bough,
 Can like the cocks of Hades crow,
 Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud
 In glory of changeless metal
 Common bird or petal
 And all complexities of mire or blood.

They were filled with concern and commotion, as they surmised that the island would become part of the Roman domain.' Attaleiates, *Hist.* 28.4, trans. Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 411 (Tsolakis 2011, 174.11–16).

32 Yeats (Finneran 1984, 207).

33 Yeats (Finneran 1984, 227–228).

34 Yeats (Finneran 1984, 248–249).

The poem seems a hymn to quietude and order. Yet it too is fraught with ambivalence. The soldiery commissioned to keep order is itself disorderly, disarmed both ways by being 'abed'. 'After' is placed to make the syntax ambivalent: 'night-walkers' song' *seems* to recede at midnight but might rather begin then. The dome's disdain for human life seems to be silent. Why, then, such aural tumult in what follows? The golden bird is raucous. Is it 'changeless' like its substance or subject (in 'embittered') to the metamorphosis of light? And why so many images of things that are not there, the 'faggot', 'steel', and 'storm'? This poem gives a different version of Byzantium dreaming: not the apathy of the first poem but agitated, its images phantasmagoric. Yet they occupy a history-sanctioned space.

At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit
 Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,
 Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,
 Where blood-begotten spirits come
 And all complexities of fury leave,
 Dying into a dance,
 An agony of trance,
 An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

The gong is conduit to that space. It sounds through time 'At midnight' to the speaker. It makes the city a stage for images of non-corporeal chaos. It creates a void for a succession of past tumults. In *Sailing to Byzantium*, the term 'begotten' was quite clear; it was 'natural'. Here the flames and spirits are dissociated from the bodily, yet 'blood-begotten'. Their agony seems purgatorial but refines itself into no emblem. It seems they are called up to re-live their earthly suffering and die, even as spirits, into 'trance'. But is it final or repetitive? The last stanza indicates the dance is never done. The spirits self-generate. The surge is physical and violent.

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,
 Spirit after spirit! The smithies break the flood,
 The golden smithies of the Emperor!
 Marbles of the dancing floor
 Break bitter furies of complexity,
 Those images that yet
 Fresh images beget,
 That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.

All the poem's ambivalence is focussed on that repeated 'break'. Logically, the smithies hold back the flood, the marbles hold the spirits to one space where they may dance themselves into quietude. But 'break'—that great iconoclast concept—is so rhythmically emphatic that the impression is reversed: as if the flood breaks through the barrier, the bitter furies break the marbles. In other poems, Yeats succumbs to something of the very anarchy he rails against: at the end of *Meditations* with its 'Phantoms of Hatred',³⁵ or *Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen*, where dream and cataclysm alternate without explanation, or in the 'blood-dimmed tide' of *The Second Coming*.³⁶ In *Byzantium*, he finds a way to release anarchic energies without being over-rhetorical or swept away. 'Break' holds back the flood rhythmically for a moment, before allowing the reaction: the same time-lag lets the ambiguity be felt. The poem's powerful close aligns itself with 'mire and blood' and 'bitter furies of complexity': 'That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.' Even 'dolphin-torn' is ambiguous: is the dolphin torn or tearer?

Nothing could seem further from the tranquil, if drugged, ending of the first poem, and yet they are corollaries. *Sailing to Byzantium* gave Yeats entrée to a world where he could immolate and refashion his own particular 'bitter furies'. *Byzantium* recreates that world as one in which the past retains its energies, its furious truths, containing them provisionally in a quasi-sacred space where they will always be terrifyingly accessible and potent, and yet held apart. The echo brings them back, the images locate them.

Part of Byzantium's attraction for Yeats is obvious—its legacy in western art and thought, its versions of a fixed social order mirroring a metaphysic, its extremities refined by craft. Because Byzantium endured so long, exported so much, and yet remained somewhat mysterious and unknown in general western culture, he could work it as wildly as he chose and yet return to it as a kind of constant. The constant point may have been the one he isolated, in Justinian's reign, but I suspect the stronger magnet lay beyond that. Neither of his Byzantine poems is strictly rational but each follows something of the course that to Yeats marked the transition from iconodulism to iconoclasm: the transition from the 'stern faces' of 'Graeco-Roman figures'³⁷ to 'that decoration which seems to undermine our self-control and is, it seems, of Persian origin'.³⁸ The poem *Byzantium* begins with 'the great cathedral' and 'the fury and the

35 Yeats (Finneran 1984, 205).

36 Yeats (Finneran 1984, 187).

37 Yeats 1937, 281.

38 See note 19 above.

mire of human veins'. It ends with the dolphin, who has blood and flesh and feeling but whose image is non-human. Even the spirits cannot clearly be identified as human. Yeats approached Byzantium through the Justinian phase of balance with the Graeco-Roman but my guess is that he primarily yearned for—and sought—the aesthetics of iconoclasm, that 'decoration which *seems* to undermine our self-control' although it does not do so. The equivalent of this 'decoration' was his craft. Byzantium allowed him to sail very close to the wind without being overturned.

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Conclusion

Translating Byzantium in the New Millennium

Bronwen Neil

The first seven chapters of this volume consider moments in the history of cultural translation, starting from the sixth-century chronicles of Malalas (Roger Scott), through the eleventh-century saints' *lives* by John of Amalfi (John Duffy), up to the medieval Arabic and western translations of Greek texts, as well as the lesser known translation of Arabic and Latin texts into Greek (Maria Mavroudi). The final five chapters take us beyond the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to reception of Byzantine culture and texts by the Humanist philosophers (Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides), Jesuit theologians (Michael Champion), Romanian epic poets (Alfred Vincent), Ottoman architects (Nigel Westbrook and Rene Van Meeuwen), and as far as the twentieth-century Anglo-Irish poet William Butler Yeats (Penelope Buckley). If there is a common trait across all the modes and genres of translation studied here, it is the free adaptation of the Byzantine legacy by each of these translators—whether they were philosophers, theologians, poets, historiographers or builders—to the needs of their own society. We are now familiar with the verb 're-purposing' for building works, and I suggest that it can also be usefully applied to the context of handing down Byzantine texts and other cultural artefacts, as Yvette Hunt shows in her chapter on the Dioscorides manuscript.

As a conclusion to this collection of studies on the translation of Byzantine texts and culture into different languages and contexts, it seems fitting to consider the contemporary context of Byzantine studies and how it can be adapted to fit modern needs and interests. How has globalization affected the research agenda and research methods in Byzantine Studies over the past two decades? I seek to highlight the opportunities and challenges posed by the internet revolution in the academic environment of contemporary Byzantinists in the global context and particularly in Australia.¹ I also look at the impact of larger cultural trends on Byzantine studies, especially the increasingly limited opportunities for government funding in the Humanities generally. As in other countries, Australian scholarship is affected by changes in emphasis and

1 An early version of this chapter was presented at the plenary session on 'Byzantine Studies in the New Millennium', 22nd International Byzantine Congress, Belgrade, 22–27 August, 2016. I sincerely thank Prof. Claudia Rapp for the invitation to present in that forum, along with representatives of Byzantine studies in America, Europe and Asia.

methodology in the historical sciences in general, and in Byzantine and medieval studies in particular. These considerations will lead to a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the opportunities and challenges that our field faces in the new millennium. This epilogue also pays tribute to the philologists and historians of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies (AABS) who have mediated Byzantine texts in translation to a global audience.

Changing Research Methods and Agenda

We do not have a separate funding body for the Humanities in Australia, meaning that history projects compete with researchers in science and technology for a fairly limited pool of funding. All external funding comes from the Australian Research Council, to which I am greatly indebted along with many others in Byzantine studies of history, archaeology, or religion. Over the past ten years Australian scholars have received government funding for various projects: Roger Scott and John Burke received three years' funding from the Australian Research Council for their edition of the Skylitzes Codex. Amelia Brown was awarded an Early Career Research Award for a history of maritime religion in ancient Greece (University of Queensland), but as a Hellenist her interests extend well into Byzantium, and she is also working on a diachronic study of ancient Corinth, through its pagan, early Christian, Byzantine and later incarnations.² Caillan Davenport, also at University of Queensland, received an Early Career Research Award for his study of changing perceptions of the emperor in the 4th and 5th centuries. A recently-funded Future Fellowship project entitled *Dreams, Prophecy and Violence from 400–1000 CE*, combines the study of patristic, Byzantine and early Islamic texts on dreams and dream interpretation.³

Many of these projects involve the edition, translation and commentaries upon Latin and Greek texts, a species of academic production that is not recognised by the national Department of Training and Education as a book, unless it is accompanied by a hefty introduction demonstrating 'original research'. Government-funding of projects on Classical and Byzantine archaeology, history and religious studies has declined markedly, making the period from 1990 to mid-2000s appear in retrospect a Golden Age for the funding of 'pure basic' research. Our stress on an objective, non-confessional approach to the sources

² Brown 2012.

³ An introduction can be found in Neil 2016. See also the full project description at www.bronwenneil.com.

is partially dictated by funding constraints. Recent Australian projects, however, have increasingly been shaped according to the need to demonstrate that they meet a perceived national benefit. These benefits include a greater understanding of inter- and intra-religious dialogue and conflict ('Defending Our Borders'; 'Understanding Cultures and Communities'). Projects which locate Australia in its Asian cultural context are also encouraged.

Manichaeism in Asia has been a particular focus of Samuel Lieu's work at Macquarie University over the past three decades. Lieu's project on Asian Manichaeism, which spread rapidly and successfully along the Silk Road and arrived in China before the Tang dynasty, is based at Macquarie University, in the Department of Ancient History's Ancient Cultures Research Centre, founded by two Australian Byzantinists.⁴ The varied nationalities of its investigators reflect the multicultural nature of the research topic, which brings together several international collaborators to study Manichaean missionary techniques through a close examination and publication of the surviving texts in Chinese from Dunhuang and Turfan and their parallels in Middle Iranian, Old Turkish and Coptic.⁵ Incidentally, out of more than 700 projects funded by the Australian Research Council in 2013, this was one of only two projects with the self-nominated Field of Research classification 'Religion and Religious Studies', an indication of the difficulty of attaining funding for religious projects. History has proved an easier discipline to justify for public funding purposes.

Due to the large number of Greek migrants who have settled in Australia since the 1950s, Byzantine studies and especially Orthodox theology have a home-grown audience in our major cities, and especially Melbourne, where Eva Anagnostou Laoutides is a lecturer in Classical and Hellenic Studies at Monash University. Ken Parry, current president of AABS, is a specialist in Orthodox and Byzantine studies at Macquarie University, Sydney. The Ancient Cultures Research Centre there co-publishes the Brepols series *Studia Antiqua Australiensia*, which includes several volumes on patristic themes.⁶ Its director, Malcolm Choat, is an internationally recognised specialist in Coptic studies, who has completed a government-funded research project on literacy and

4 Prof. Alanna Nobbs and Prof. Sam Lieu, both recently retired. In 2013 Prof Lieu was the recipient of a Discovery Outstanding Research Award by the Australian Research Council for his project on *Skilfully planting the trees of light—Manichaean texts in Chinese (2013–2017)*.

5 See the Australian Research Council website, <http://arc.gov.au/pdf/DP13/DP13> (accessed 31.1.15).

6 E.g. Choat 2006, Neil 2006.

scribal practices in Late Antique Egypt, and has been awarded funding for another on papyrus forgeries and how to identify them.⁷

A new Discovery Project based at Macquarie University involves the study of inter- and intra-religious dialogue and conflict in the 5th to 7th centuries of Christianity—relations between Christianity and Judaism, paganism, and Islam. This project, *Memories of Utopia: Destroying the Past to Create the Future*, aims to identify common strategies used by pagans, Christians and Jews to rewrite their past or alter their built environment to aid ideological revisionism. Its chief investigators, Bronwen Neil, Pauline Allen and Wendy Mayer, are joined by post-doctoral fellow and art historian Leonela Fundic, from the Institute of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade, and cultural historian Chris de Wet from the Department of Ancient and Biblical Studies at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. This multi-disciplinary project has relevance to the revision of history that is taking place in the Middle East under Islamic separatists, both in terms of their targeted destruction of cultural artefacts and their rewriting of early Islamic history.

Adapting to Contemporary Technologies

The field of Byzantine studies has been vastly assisted by the internet revolution, and recent technological advances in the fields of information dissemination and publication. Recent trends in the discipline reflect these advances, and include interdisciplinarity or fusion, the prevalence of translations of Byzantine texts into modern languages, and online publishing and language teaching.

Australian scholars in Byzantine studies increasingly endeavour to cross traditional divides, for example, between Classics and Christian literature; archaeology and literary studies; social history and theology; Christian and early Islamic history; studies in Late Antiquity. Necessity has surely been the mother of invention here, as we scramble to achieve or maintain 'critical mass' in an increasingly uncertain economic climate. The emphasis on interdisciplinarity continues to attract collaborations with scholars of other disciplines.

7 Choat's current project is described on the website for the Ancient Cultures Research Centre (ARC Discovery Project, 2017–2019) http://mq.edu.au/research/centres_and_groups/ancient_cultures_research_centre/

Translating Byzantine Texts into English

Since 1982, annotated translations of Byzantine texts have been a specialty of Australian Byzantinists, and they have led the way in bringing little known Greek and Latin texts from the Byzantine era to scholars around the world. In 1982, Classicist Ron Ridley, from the University of Melbourne, produced a hugely popular translation of Zosimus.⁸ In the 1980s to 1990s, the founding members of AABS (Ann Moffatt, Michael Jeffreys, Elizabeth Jeffreys, Roger Scott, and later two young Oxford graduates, Brian Croke and Pauline Allen)⁹ produced the first English translations of some key Byzantine sources, including John Malalas¹⁰ and Marcellinus *comes*.¹¹ In particular, Australian scholars have specialised in Byzantine literary genres that had previously been downplayed as 'popular' and 'low-brow', such as chronicles, letters and sermons. The counter-cultural nature of such work in the Australian university environment of that time cannot be exaggerated. Recent volumes in the series include Eustathios of Thessaloniki's *The Capture of Thessaloniki* and *Secular Orations*.¹² Another recent highlight has been the success of Ann Moffatt's English translation of Constantine Porphyrogenetos' *De ceremoniis* in two volumes with the Bonn text.¹³ Dr Moffatt plans a second edition when the long-awaited French edition of the Greek text is published. *ByzA* has recently migrated to Brill, which will produce all future publications in the series in collaboration with the AABS. Other collaborations between respected European publishing houses and Australian universities include two Brepols series, co-published with Macquarie University: the *Studia Antiqua Australiensia* series mentioned above, which has also produced translations of Byzantine texts for the first

8 Ridley 1982.

9 Prof. Pauline Allen has gone on to produce many more translations of and commentaries on Byzantine and patristic works in Latin and Greek, including those of John Chrysostom, Gelasius of Rome, Hormisdas of Rome, Severus of Antioch, Sophronius of Jerusalem (e.g. Allen 2009) and Maximus the Confessor.

10 Jeffreys, Jeffreys, Scott et al. 1986; and a collection of essays on Malalas: Jeffreys with Croke & Scott 1990.

11 Croke 1995.

12 Melville-Jones 1988 and Stone 2013, with the aid of John Melville-Jones, Byzantinist and numismatist at University of Western Australia, Perth. A full list of *Byzantina Australiensia* publications, now available through www.Brill.com, can be found online at <http://www.aabs.org.au/byzaust/>

13 Moffatt and Tall 2012.

time in any modern language,¹⁴ and several volumes of the *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum*.

The uptake of E-books has been particularly avid in Australia, where the distance from North American, British, and European publishing houses means long delays and high retail prices. Relatively small publishers like Ashgate (now Taylor and Francis) and Brill have been able to continue to make volumes on Byzantine studies available online. Selected papers from the 16th AABS conference, along with several commissioned contributions from international scholars, were published by Ashgate as *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*.¹⁵

The field of Byzantine studies is by no means alone in the proliferation of handbooks and companion volumes, aimed not just at scholars in the field but also at students and interested laypersons. Late-Antique studies have seen the same explosion in public interest. The publication of these handbooks has been much enabled by the appearance of the E-book, which has the added advantage of being able to be continually updated as new secondary sources appear. Two Byzantine/Orthodox theological handbooks have recently appeared under Australian editorship: *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor*,¹⁶ and *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Patristic Reception*.¹⁷ This format offers an opportunity for specialists to mediate their knowledge to a broad audience, while also offering a *status quaestionis* for other scholars in the field.

Online Language Teaching

The languages and literatures of Byzantium (Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic) are the foundation for the studies of its history, theology, philosophy, art history, and philology, but a working knowledge of Latin and/or Greek, which used to be mandatory for those wishing to undertake postgraduate studies in Byzantine studies, is increasingly difficult to insist upon as a criterion for enrolment. The teaching of Latin, patristic Greek and Syriac online allows us to run small combined classes of local and international students, even though there is no substitute for face-to-face teaching in real time. The requirement to teach for seminaries affects the curriculum and content but also allows us

14 E. g. Neil 2006, an account of the exiles of Pope Martin I (649–653), Maximus the Confessor (c. 590–662) and his disciples.

15 Neil and Garland 2013.

16 Allen and Neil 2015.

17 Parry 2015. *The Oxford Handbook of Michael Psellos*, edited by Michael Jeffreys, is forthcoming.

to keep ecclesiastical Latin and patristic Greek courses alive. Many more institutions offer *koinê* Greek as part of their biblical studies offerings but no Byzantine Greek.

List-serves have also helped us build and participate in international scholarly networks. Our greatest opportunity to do this comes from conferences: the five-yearly International Byzantine Congress, and our biennial AABS conference. We welcomed invited guest Professor Derek Krueger from University of North Carolina at Greensboro to the 19th AABS conference in February 2017. The theme of the conference, which received a record number of offered papers, some thirty-four, is *Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium*.¹⁸ The International Byzantine Congress of the International Association for Byzantine Studies (AIEB), now under the leadership of John Haldon, plays a crucial role in bringing Byzantinists together from around the globe every five years. The choice of Istanbul as the next conference venue in 2020 is a welcome development, and indicates a gradual broadening of the traditional parameters of Byzantine studies. The AIEB recently welcomed Argentina as a new member country, and Byzantine studies are flourishing in China.

University and federal funding for international doctoral scholarships on Byzantine topics has allowed an increase in enrolments over the past few years. Unfortunately there are still many more expressions of interest—especially from Greece and eastern Europe as a result of the financial crisis that is gripping those countries—than there are successful candidates. There is also a pressing need for more postdoctoral fellowship funding, for both Australian and international students. There is plenty of room for strategic expansion in this area.

Larger Cultural Trends

Larger cultural trends across the globe have an impact on Byzantine Studies. These include decreasing government funding for research activities in the Humanities; the amalgamation of small research centres under large umbrella institutes; and an increasing focus within universities on international enrolments for higher degrees by research.

The Australian Research Council has limited federal resources for funding research in the Humanities. The tiny proportion that is awarded to history projects favours Australian and especially Indigenous history. Religious studies

18 The conference is convened by Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides, Bronwen Neil and Ken Parry. Abstracts are available at <http://www.aabs.org.au/conferences/>

are likewise not well funded. That being said, Byzantine research proposals are perhaps disproportionately successful (see those listed above). The abolition of research fellowships for mid-career scholars has hit postdoctoral researchers very hard. They have been replaced by Future Fellowships, mainly intended for Australians who wish to return from overseas. From the next round, they will be limited to those who do not already have academic positions. The three-year federal election cycle has huge repercussions for the long-term funding of any research in this country.

Silo-avoidance

The winds of institutional change are spreading a chill through the bones of Byzantinists in particular (already an aging population). There is usually not more than one Byzantinist in any one tertiary institution, and these individuals often moonlight in other disciplines, whether that be art history, English, classics or modern European history. This is now the case even at Oxford's Centre for Oriental Studies, which houses several Byzantinists of note. Macquarie University in Sydney is rare in that it now has three Byzantinists on staff. The most recent appointment, Meaghan McEvoy, author of an acclaimed book on child emperors,¹⁹ was employed specifically to teach and carry out research in this area. This may indicate a resurgence of student interest in the combination of disciplines that constitute Byzantine studies, and certainly bodes well for future generations of Byzantinists.

Conclusion

What does the future hold for Byzantine studies in the current millennium? This is a critical period for the disciplines that come under the umbrella of Byzantine studies, not just in Australia but world-wide, with funding for the Humanities generally at an all-time low due to the recent Global Financial Crisis in 2008 and its repercussions, especially in the former Byzantine territories of the Balkans, Greece, Italy and Russia.

An increasing degree of secularisation is inevitable, and should perhaps be embraced as broadening public interest in the early Christian centuries, their literature, and their material culture. The focus is turning from the narrowly theological to the broadly historical, and especially social and cultural history.

19 McEvoy 2013.

We need to de-mystify and secularise our scholarly undertakings so as to reach a broader audience. Similarly, the teaching and research of Byzantine studies need to be adapted to a broader (non-Greek-speaking) audience if they are to survive into the next millennium in our universities and beyond. As mentioned above, it is increasingly limiting to insist upon a working knowledge of Greek or Latin as a criterion for enrolment in postgraduate studies in Byzantine studies. The second best option is to offer bridging courses for those who need to improve their language skills at the beginning of their candidature.

Technological breakthroughs—websites, web-marketing, E-newsletters, online teaching, print-on-demand, E-books and E-journals—have allowed us largely to conquer the tyranny of distance. The expense of international air-travel is still our biggest stumbling block.

The global perspective is one that was familiar to Byzantines or *Romaioi* themselves, and perhaps offers avenues for comparison that are yet to be explored. The study of Byzantium and its neighbours may have something to offer students of global politics, especially with the reintegration of Russia and its former satellites into capitalist markets.²⁰ The rise and fall of empires is certainly of enduring relevance, as the theme of the next Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Studies Symposium, ‘Rethinking Empire’, suggests.²¹ Globalisation has made Byzantine studies more accessible to the general public, not less, and our secular universities are just beginning to pick up on the new popularity of Byzantine military and material culture, as well as the traditional courses in history, theology and art history. The challenge of diminishing public funds for Byzantine teachers and researchers will have to be met by innovation and adaptability to the new global market. As we seek to broaden Byzantine horizons, we stand to gain a whole new audience. The cultural translators studied within this volume would surely sympathise with such a goal.

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